

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Reading in Performance, Lire en Spectacle

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"Pre-Choreographic Movement Kit" (2014)

ABRACADABRA, deals with the appearance and the disappearance of form. The mental state seeks to create illusions. Abracadabra plays with the limits of the audience's perception and attention.



when, time, space. The objects influence the users mental state and give intentions on the way they want to be moved:

ABRACADABRA

here is the score for an unrealized Activity by Kaprow called *Meters* (1972)

'carrying a cube of ice in the mouth

/ carrying a cube of ice in the hand /

'walking on /

swallowing the melting ice till it's gone

/ calling out: now! /

walking on

/ waiting for the hand to hold no ice /

calling out: now! /

walking on /


'waiting for the hand to dry .

calling out: now!

/ walking on:




TASK
Repeat something you did in this room earlier today.



The diagram shows a vertical sequence of footprints and arrows. From bottom to top: a white footprint, a black footprint, a white footprint with an upward arrow, a black footprint with an upward arrow, a white footprint with an upward arrow, a black footprint with an upward arrow, a white footprint with an upward arrow, a black footprint with an upward arrow, and a final white footprint at the top.

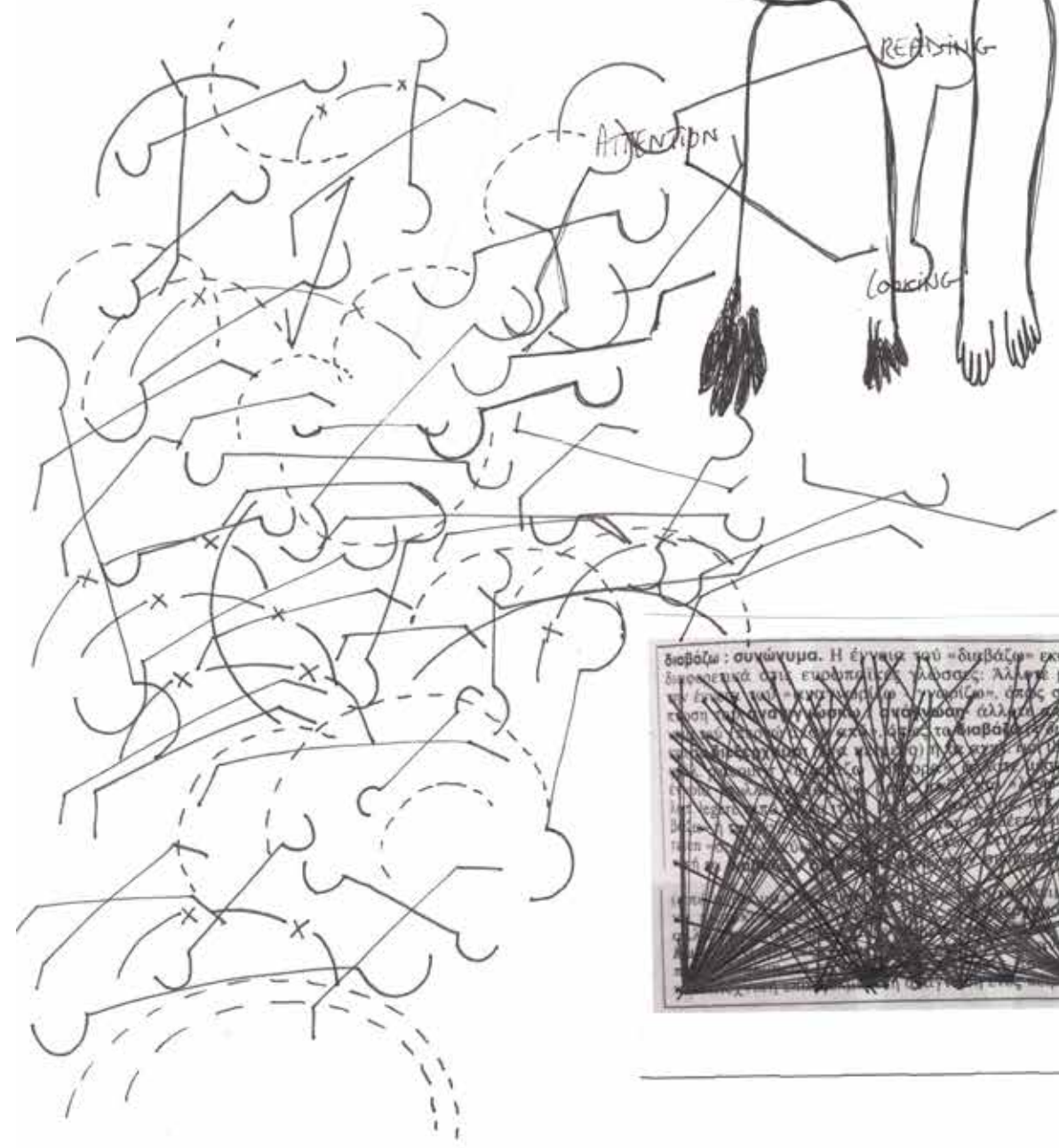
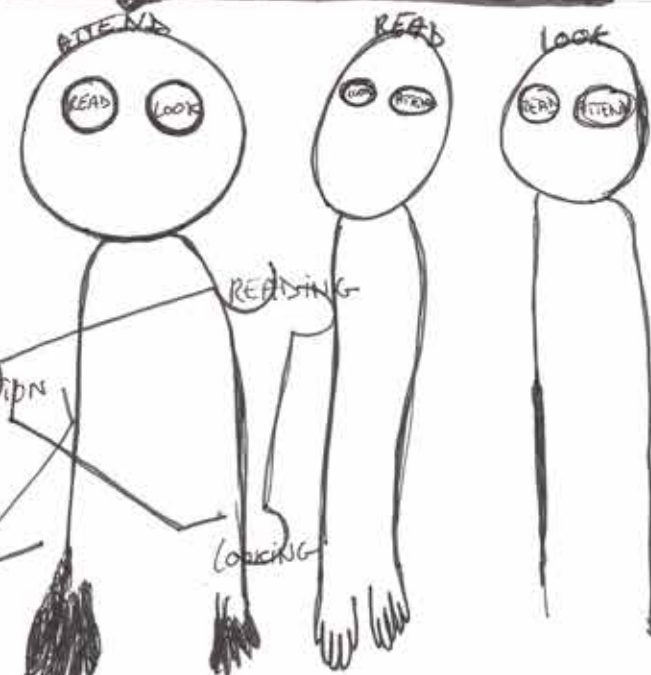
TASK
Exit the room and enter again.
Start where you left off.



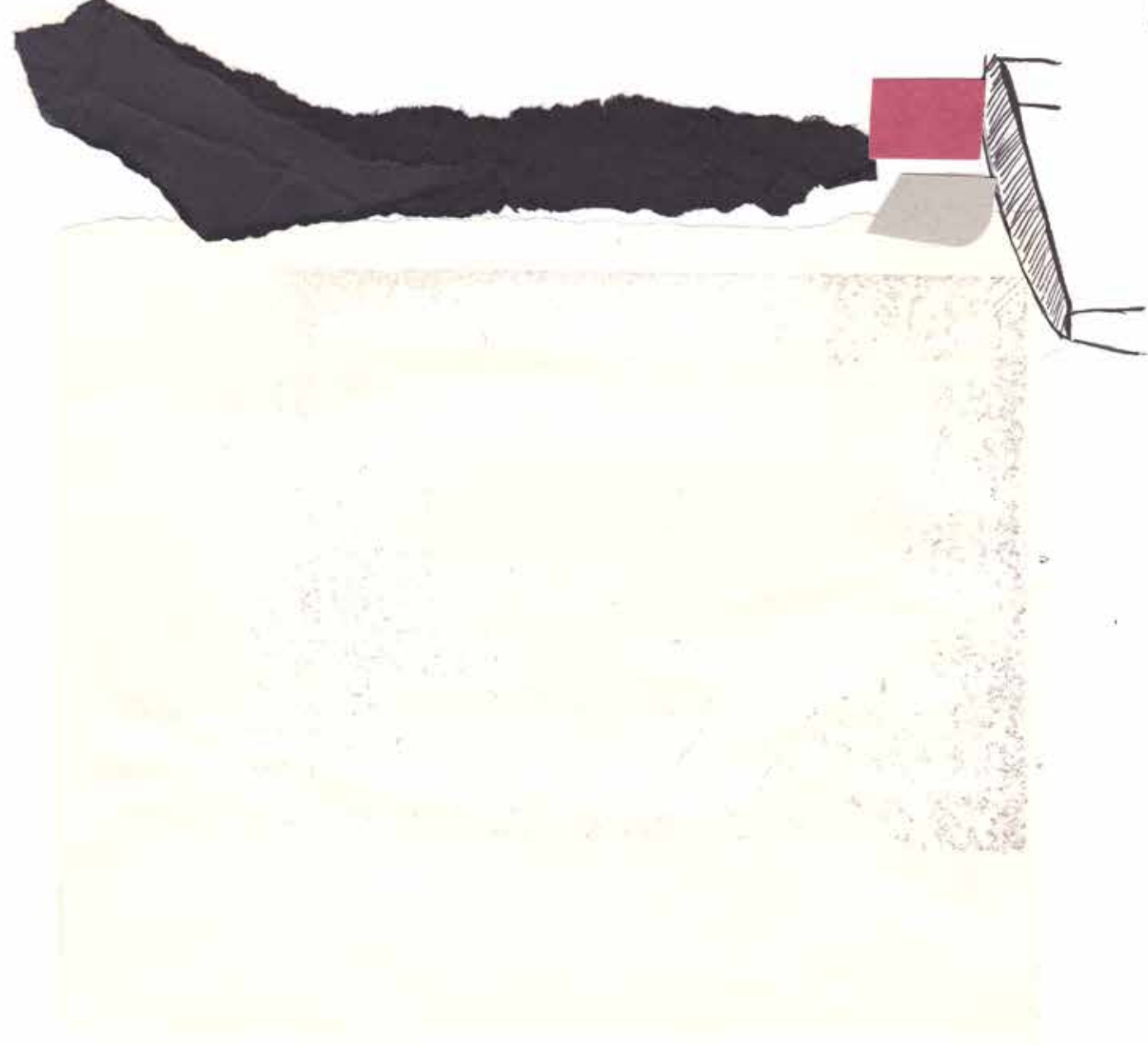
The diagram shows a curved path of footprints and arrows. It starts with a white footprint, followed by a black footprint, then a series of alternating white and black footprints connected by curved arrows. The path ends with a white footprint, and a final black footprint is shown at the end of the path.

διαβάζω : συνώνυμα. Η έννοια του «διαβάζω» εκφράστηκε διαφορετικά στις ευρωπαϊκές γλώσσες: Άλλοτε μέσα από την έννοια του «αναγιγνωσκώ / αναγνώση»· άλλοτε από την έννοια του «περνάω μέσα από», όπως το **διαβάζω** (< δια-βιβάζω) και το **διεξέρχομαι** (ένα κείμενο) ή τα αγγλ. run through και γαλλ. parcourir «διαβάζω γρήγορα»· άλλοτε μέσα από την έννοια «συλλέγω, μαζεύω, βάζω μαζί» και «λέγω», όπως το λατ. legere, από όπου ιταλ. leggere, γαλλ. lire, ισπ. leer «διαβάζω» ή τα αγγλ. read «διαβάζω», που συνδέεται με τα γερμ. raten «συμβουλεύω» και reden «μιλώ». Στη σημερινή ελληνική τα **διαβάζω** / **διάβασμα** δηλώνουν σιωπηρή ανάγνωση (από μέσα μας), το **αναγνώση** εκφάνιση του κειμένου που να παρακολουθείται από άλλους, το **διεξέρχομαι** γρήγορη αλλά και επιμελημένη ανάγνωση, τα **εκφωνώ** και **απαγγέλλω** ανάγνωση πεζού και ποιητικού κειμένου αντίστοιχως, προοριζόμενη να ακουστεί από ακροατές, το δε **αποδίδω** καλλιτεχνική επαγγελματική ανάγνωση ενός κειμένου.

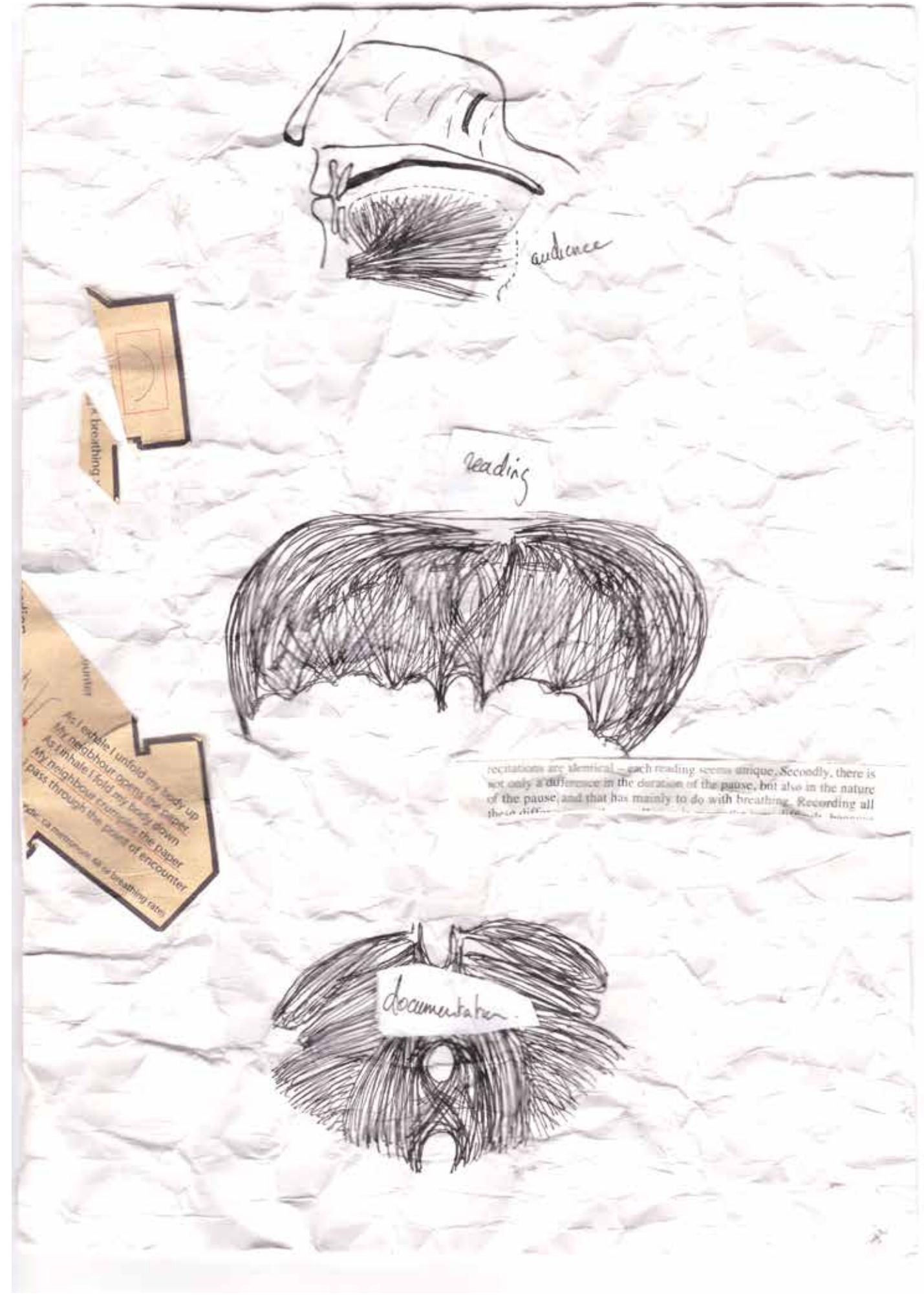
CHOREO READING



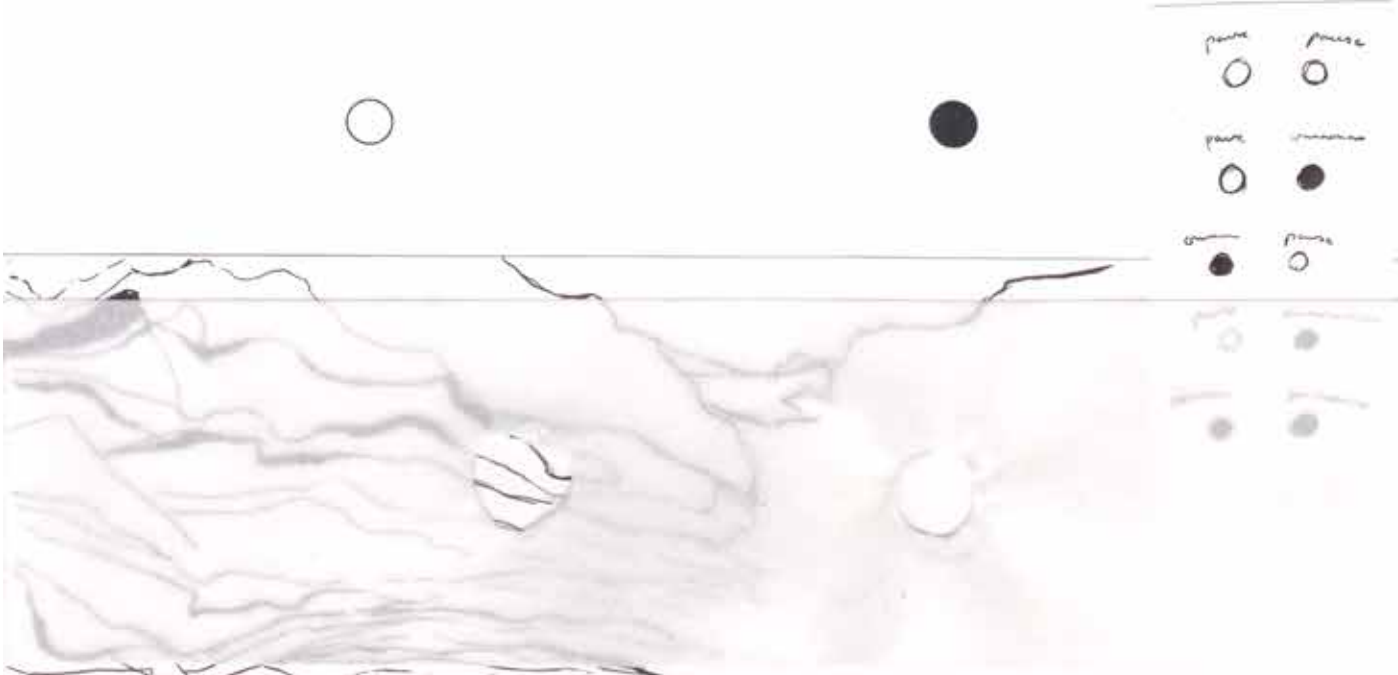
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it is snowing but it is no longer
snowing when it started to snow I
went to the window I went missing
some time then just before the snow
started falling again into great ever
slower flakes it must also have
stopped snowing



Pause omnomnom



0 - Silence. Close your eyes

1- Take a moment to pay attention to your breath and what touches your skin.

2- Keep your eyes shut and slowly crumple pages with your attention on how the paper is touching you.

3- Continue crumpling or un-crumpling the pages with your eyes open.


4- Take your time with the materiality of the pages before you start reading the printed words in silence.

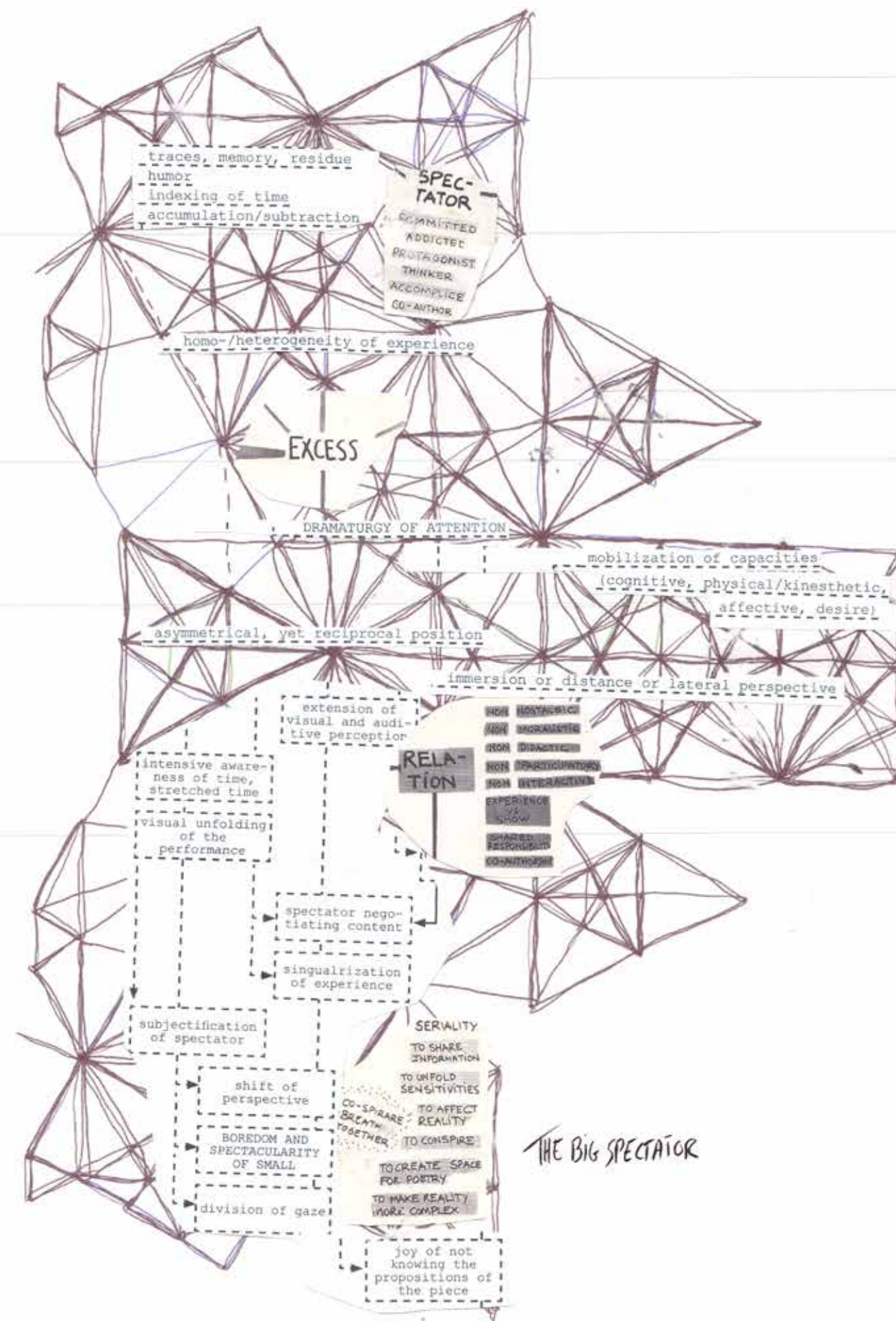
5- Choose fragments of text to read out loud. Keep in mind that you edit/compose a unique and polyphonic document with the other players.

6- If you find a written movement score on a page, you are invited to play it.

7- There is a video camera on the table that records what enters its visual field and the sounds produces by the practice. You can let it be moved by what is happening on the table, orientate it and take it in your hand to film what interest you.

0 - Silence open your eyes

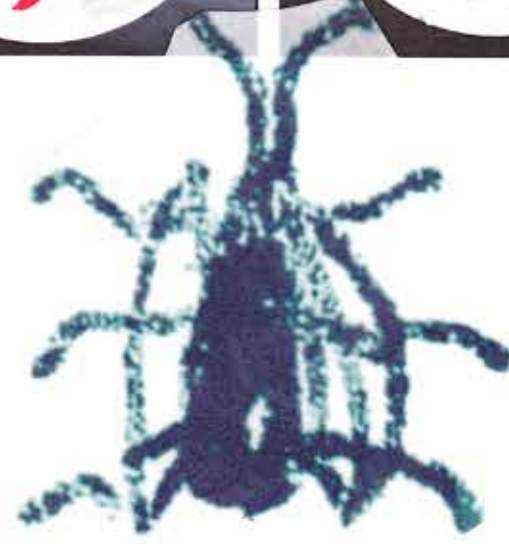




THE BIG SPECTATOR



everything is gone – not everything
nothing is gone – not nothing

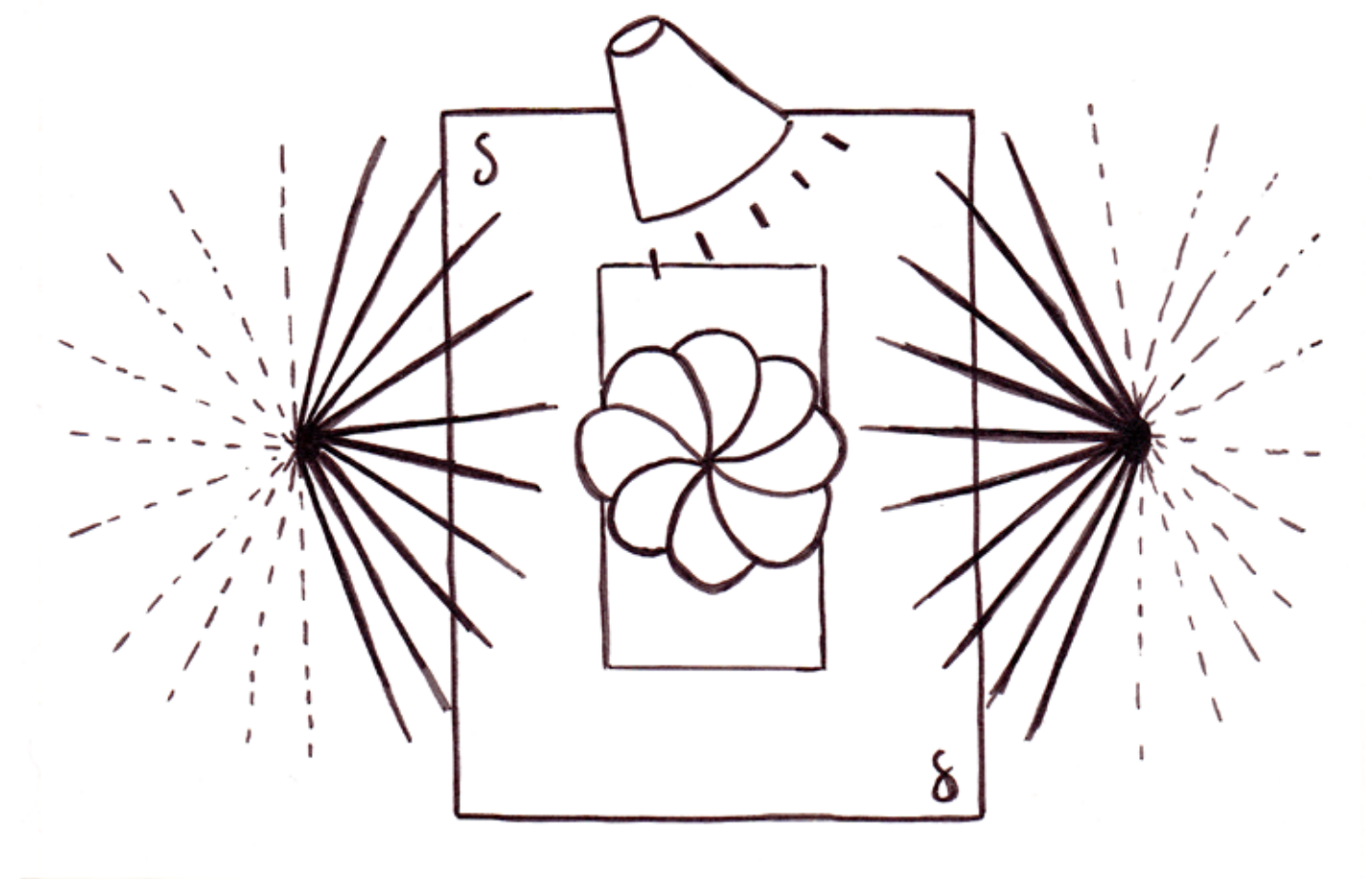


The food would be the written archive, and the eater would be the bookworm.

The Breathing Archive invites you to experience the archive from the bookworm's point of view, digging holes across pages by eating words and paper. You can eat through a tunnel across the lines, leaving trails of half-eaten sentences behind...







HOLDING

a cut within or between interview material (hole in page)
 words cut from interview material (placed on left page)
 alternative readings / quotes (placed on left page)
 words / echoed repetition
 speaking on an inward breath
 speaking on an outward breath
 DETECT repetition, in search of
 prolonged stutter
 pushed / used in context
 NO TITLE
 inhalation
 exhalation
 long-drawn in
 deep exhalation
 weary inhalation
 sharp breath
 puffed breath
 inhalation followed by an outward puff
 smacking lips
 er, erm
 pause

TRANS TITLE
 DE TITLE
 ENTITLE
 ANTI TITLE
 PARA TITLE
 SUPERTITLE
 OVERTITLE
 SUB TITLE

DE TEXT
 PERITEXT
 HYPERTEXT
 PRETEXT
 CONTEXT

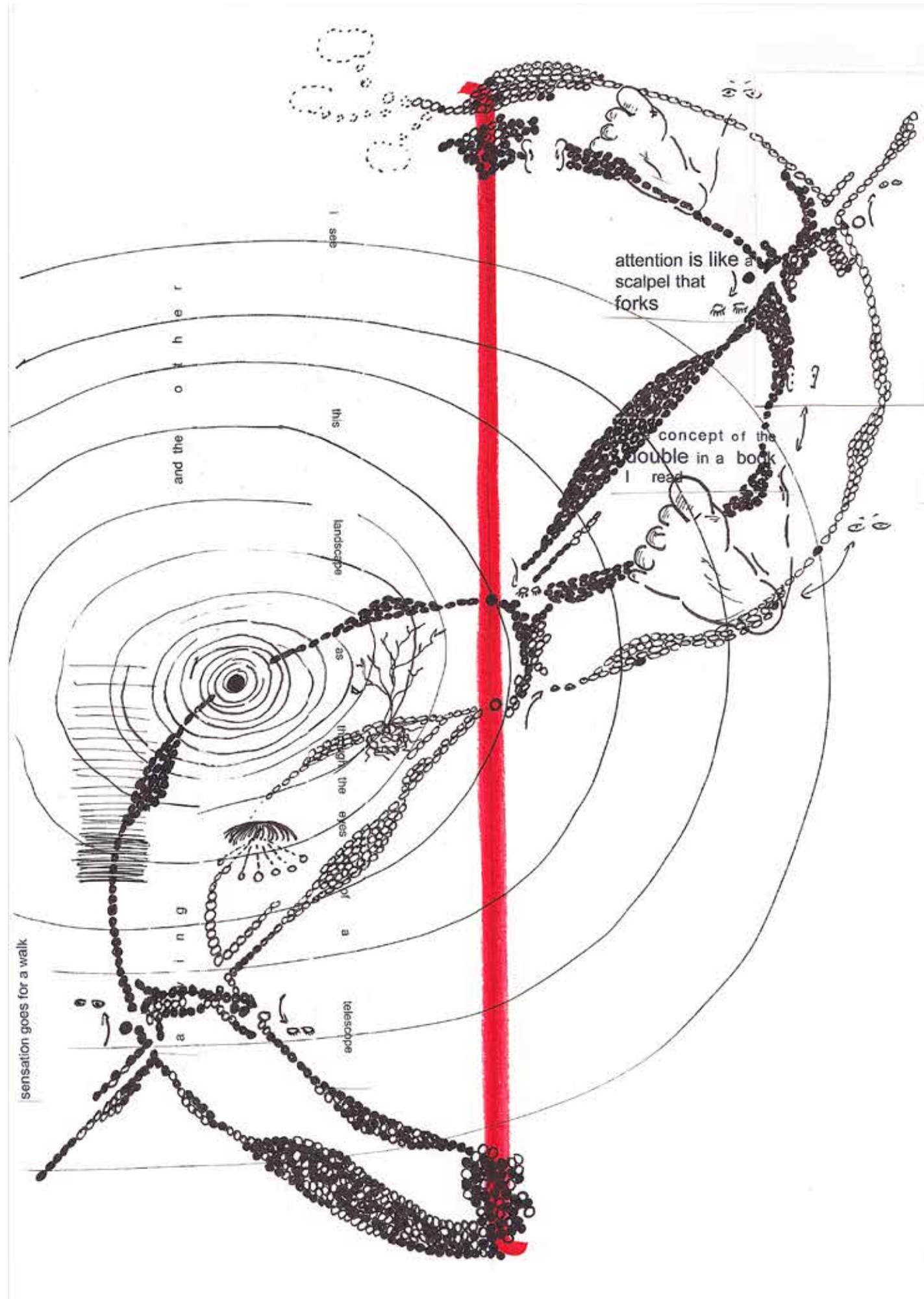
— Nossa dúvida é semelhante, nosso objetivo parecido. 45
 [Nossos sentimentos às vezes se cruzam
 e as experiências não pode ser comum,
 Essa afirmação...
 O rapaz vê ao longe...
 É a entrada para o mundo...
 agora está ali.

what people believe that
 happened. But what people
 believed. And that's how it works.
 it doesn't have any...
 the actors
 leading the audience
 the rest. And the...
 to fill out for themselves,
 thing O depends on the...

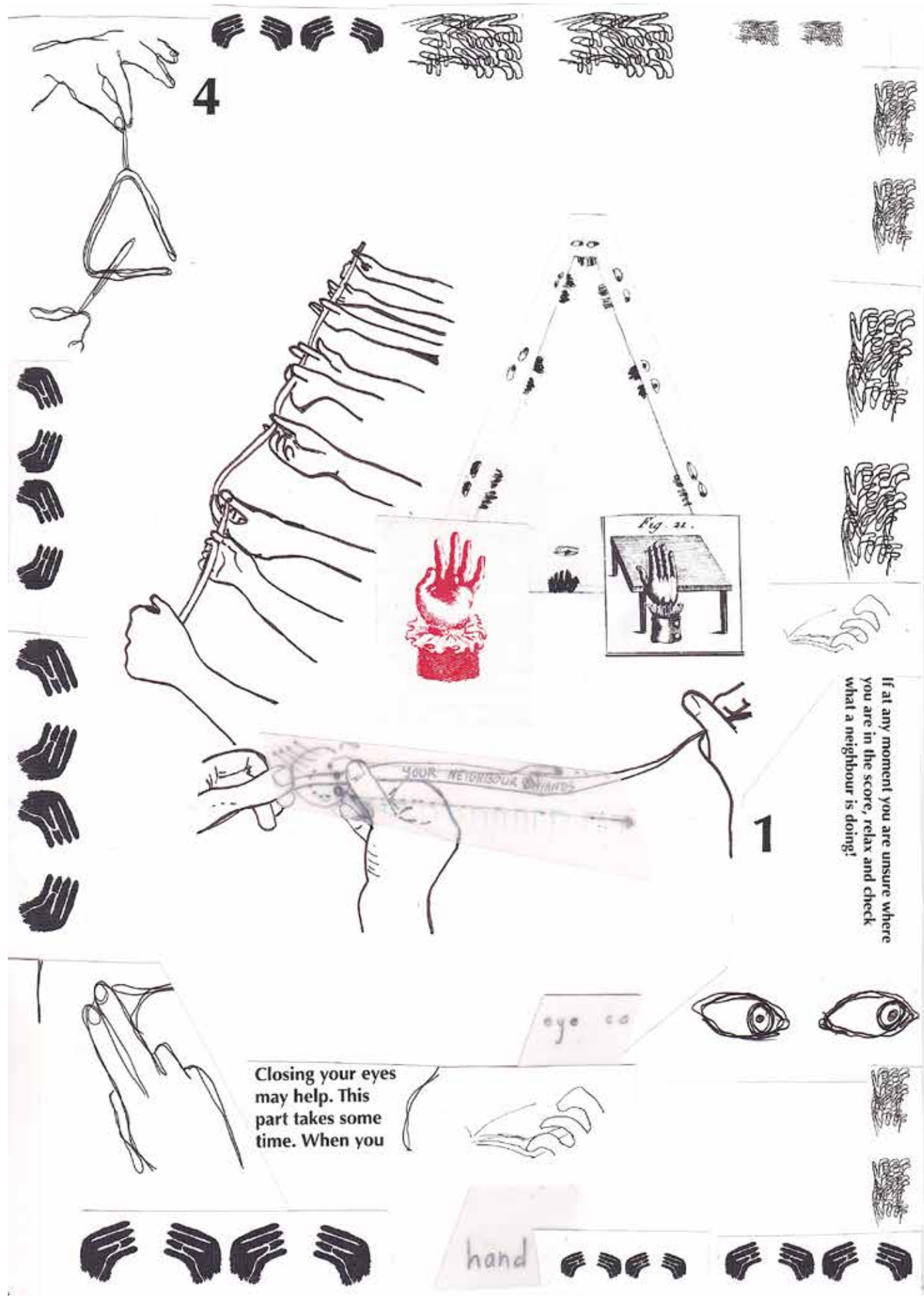
as we
 2006-7 that we were
 in reverse the feeling: There you
 come pretty close to an idea of the superhuman.
 — can just imagine.

— Notre doute est semblable, notre but identique.
 [Nos sentiments se croisent parfois
 [mais ne seront jamais les mêmes.
 [Une expérience ne peut pas être commune,
 [elle est unique.
 Cette affirmation se détache de la bouche d'Adeline.
 Le garçon voit au loin une lumière qui clignote.
 C'est l'entrée du métro. Ce qu'il soupçonnait
 est maintenant là.

44



If at any moment you are unsure where you are in the score, relax and check what a neighbour is doing!



In the process of writing *Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle*, I developed an attention to things and to nothings, material and nonmaterial, that act as supports to a spectator's reading in the time of performance. Behind my eyelids, images, fragments of texts, volumes and colours, interweave and become imprints. I materialise these imprints through cuts, drawings and collages over A4 pages. I compose with visual elements, texts, scores, subtitles, communication material online or in booklets, choreographic material, essays. While assembling a page, I embrace practices or fragments of practices. I cultivate attention to what practices do.

The following serve as notes to the visual and textual references in the fifteen graphic pages that open this book and form *Papiers voisins*. The materials that landed on these pages render an idea of forms and of language emerging from practices of choreography and performing arts. These notes are intentionally placed at a distance from the pages they relate to. This distance calls for the readers' memory and the internal imprints of shapes that touched their eyes.

Abracadabra

'Abracadabra' is a promise of magic. Something might appear, or disappear. 'Abracadabra' is one of the seven movement principles in the work of Emio Greco and Pieter Scholten developed within the 'Pre-Choreographic Movement Kit' by Bertha Bermudez and Chris Ziegler (2014). Next to this movement principle, I place the score for the activity *Meters* by Allan Kaprow (1972), an activity discussed by Laura Cull Ó Maoilearca in her lecture 'On Attention' (2014). The two practices talk to each other. Kaprow's score is open. Instructions play with relativity. The text of this score imposes confusion and questioning. For example, it is uncertain when to call out 'now.' When is ice really gone? Is it gone when it becomes water or is it gone when it is dried out? In both scores, 'Abracadabra' and *Meters*, hands are at play and tactility is an instrument of measure. Bermudez and Ziegler write: 'the objects influence the users' mental state and give intentions on the way they want to be moved' (2014:7). The paper origami in

the 'Pre-Choreographic Movement Kit,' and the cube of ice in *Meters*, both hold physical qualities that contribute to the score.

Iteration

The tasks that are printed on this page are taken from the talk 'Choreo-reading: between knowledge and life,' by choreographer and scholar Efrosini Protopapa and dance scholar Suzanne Foellmer (2018). The researchers experimented with the practice of choreo-reading. Their set-up partly consisted in picking cards they read in the time of their presentation (Foellmer Protopapa 2018a). The cards I paste on this page relate with iterative methods as processes of emergence. I added drawings of footsteps on top of these cards, inspired by Warhol's *Dance Diagram* produced in the 1960's.¹

Choreo-reading

The term choreo-reading appears in Foellmer and Protopapa's presentation at Independent dance in London (2018), and in the doctoral research of choreographer Simo Kellokumpu who examines choreography as a reading practice (2019). There is on this page a mix of various skies. A night sky is inspired by Kellokumpu's report of reading building upon the German literary scholar Wolfgang Iser. He describes two people looking at the stars, each person drawing their own constellations (Kellokumpu 2019). A second sky is a cloud of relation. Signs of relations taken from the dance notation system 'Labanotation' intermingle: to carry, to touch, to skim, to reach out, and to hold (Knust 1979). Every sign introduces a sense of reciprocity. A third sky is more of a net, imprinted over the dictionary excerpt of the Greek word *diavaso* (taken from Foellmer and Protopapa's reading cards, 2018a). This net of lines is inspired by a drawing of choreographer Trisha Brown that can be seen in the book *Traces of Dance* (Louppe 1994:15).

¹ See an example of Warhol's *Dance Diagram* <https://whitney.org/Education/EducationBlog/DoingTheFoxTrot>

The absent book in the middle

On March 24th 2017, I sit next to Bruno de Wachter on a bench in a corridor of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam for *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* (Edwardsen 2017). De Wachter is the book *Verzamelde gedichten / Against the forgetting: Selected poems* by Hans Faverey. He wears a red sweatshirt, the same red as the book he later wrote from his memorization of Faverey's collection of poems: *Verzamelde gedichten / Against the forgetting: Selected poems* by Hans Faverey by Bruno de Wachter (2016:77).

Diaphragm

Performer Bruno de Wachter writes: 'each reading seems unique ... and that has mainly to do with breathing' (2016:163). Acts of reading and breathing follow iterative movements that can happen without pilot. These acts can be controlled and changed, but can also take place with little effort, almost 'unsolicited' (borrowing the word of Sruti Bala 2018). The diaphragm is the muscle pumping the breathing. On this page, there are muscles located in the mouth, in the chest, and in the pelvic area.

Blink

The crumpled page glued on this page is the score of Anouk Llaurens' *Breathing archive* (2016). The score begins with the closure of the eyes, and ends with opening the eyes. There is more than one blink in the duration of her practice. But in my experience her score decompresses a pile of paper (through crumpling and un-crumpling) and decompresses the duration of an eye blink. The empty circle under the word 'Pause' is in the book performing in *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018). This sign of pause used in 'Labanotation' (Knust 1979) is also used to indicate the holding of a situation, and it can represent the chest. The black circle under 'omnomnom' is used in 'Labanotation' to represent the pelvis, and the physical centre of gravity (Knust 1979). The transparent paper

glued on the page is a strip of edible paper with holes in it. A student of the ArtEZ bachelor program in dance made these holes in the context of a workshop I gave about *Reading in Performance, Lire en spectacle*. Students had strips of edible papers and pens with which to write, express, and digest their understandings of the research.

The big spectator

The big spectator is the name I gave to the audience in the performance I made in 2012: *Twists in the body of the big spectator*. The performance was preceded by a series of workshops where some spectators received a 'Kit for reading the choreography.' The workshop consisted of a practice with paper and sculptural materials that distributed different roles to participants according to their affinities with elements in the kit. The kit contains two maps of the imagined space of this performance. One of the maps is the background of this page. It presents the nervous system of the big spectator. In front of this background, I collected and collated words from two resources: the diagram of Croatian company BadCo's 'post-hoc dramaturgy' (2012) and the map of Juan Dominguez' *Clean Room* drawn by Maria Jerez (in Dominguez Pérez Royo 2017:27). Both resources expose a vocabulary of spectatorship.

Exploded, dissolved, eaten, gone

On this graphic page, the book is the form *free* documentation takes. The book is being exploded (after the cover design of *The exploded gaze* by Pristaš 2018). It is torn apart (drawings by Jamillah Sungkar in *Papier incomestible*, Gallier 2020). It is dissolved in a cup of water.² It is eaten. It is gone. In the performance *No Title* (Edwardsen 2014), choreographer Mette Edwardsen names objects and makes them disappear by saying: 'gone.' The pasted piece of text comes from the book *Not Not Nothing* (Edwardsen 2019), which gathers texts that perform in Edwardsen's work from 2011 to 2017.

Three breaths in a bowl

I dissolve nine edible pages on which I wrote the words 'audience,' 'reading,' 'documentation.' I performed this score on the occasion of research presentations. Each iteration of this practice of dissolution invokes in my experience a sense of magic: an invocation, a reading. Words mingle. Ink takes off. I trust in the multiple discursive forces of this action of dissolution and I suggest it tells more than I might report here. The act of dissolving in the context of this research about documentation poses the problem of documentation's ontology, challenging the need for robustness of the document for the sake of its preservation. Dissolved in a white bowl, the nine papers and words form a grid. A bug landed on the page. It was drawn by Jamillah Sungkar for the edible book read by the audience in the real time of the performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018). The grid becomes a game of noughts and crosses (called 'morpion' in French also meaning crab, an unwanted guest).

Bookworm

The pleated paper *Papier multiforme* (Gallier 2018) crawls through this page. The text on the top of the page is from the book *Landings* (a.pass 2017): visual artist Sofia Caesar writes about the *The breathing archive*, poetic documentation practice by dance artist Anouk Llaurens (2016). The vertical text is from the fanzine distributed to spectators readers of *Chesterfield* (Eynaudi 2017: 16). In this document read in performance by the audience, Alix Eynaudi and Quim Pujol collated images, poems, and texts. A caterpillar, or a bookworm, awakes.

Pebble stone pellet

Full and empty circles, black dots, and red dots, populate the background of this page. They form a grid like a re-reading of the score *Anagram for strings* by Fluxus artist Yasuano Tone (1963). The word 'stone' is printed in capital letters; it appears twice in the printed

booklet for the performance *Black* (Edwardsen 2011). A word is written in pebble stones in the drawing made by Laetitia Gendre from a photograph that presents the poetic documentation practice *The Wave* (Laurens 2019). Stones and pellets press against each other. I drew after the photo of stones with moss used by Edwardsen for her piece *Oslo* (2017). There are hands and red dots from the edible book performing in *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018). The magician's hands make three pellets vanish. Three. Two. One. Gone.

Holding the space for

In the one-to-one performance *Extended Hermeneutics* (Lacey 2019), dancer and choreographer Jennifer Lacey places cards on a table for a reading session with her spectator. Graphic compositions designed with thick black traits, these cards 'hold the space for an artwork' (Lacey 2019a). She draws a subtle distinction between cards as representation of the artworks, and cards as holding the space for them. My reading of this distinction is that the cards are like a venue for the artwork to be invoked and that this spatiality matters. Cards provide space for the artist and her audience to read through the art. The design of my graphic page is a reverence to how Lacey designs her cards and I hope this graphic page may hold the space for her artwork. This space pulls some other references inside. There are signs of 'Labanotation' that choreographer Myriam Gourfink revisits.³ There are hands of spectators holding *The Roof* (MOHA 2016) with artists Olivia Reschovsky and Alice Pons.

Title

I orchestrate on this page an encounter between Dutch visual artist Rosie Heinrich and Brazilian choreographer Wagner Schwartz. Heinrich's notation of conversations makes space for the wordless: breathings, stutters, hesitation, and sounds of the mouth. Texts interweave and stories slide from bodies to bodies. Stories become impersonal. I collate fragments from her book *We always*

2 Jamillah Sungkar, designer and illustrator for *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* filmed herself dissolving pages from the edible book performing in the piece.

3 See for example the score of *Les temps tirillés* (Gourfink 2009) <http://www.myriam-gourfink.com/partitionLTT.pdf>

need heroes (Heinrich 2018). Heinrich's subtle practice of subtitles inspires my list of different forms of titles. Titles participate in my experience of performance. I read them, they are with me in performance, and they hold the space for it. 'Une expérience ne peut pas être commune, elle est unique' (Schwartz 2018:44). Wagner Schwartz is a choreographer who writes a novel while moving between languages, between French and Portuguese. In *Jamais ensemble mais en même temps, Nunca juntos mas ao mesmo tempo* (Schwartz 2018), the protagonist speaks in the language of someone else. Two languages sit next to each other in Schwartz' book, not together but simultaneous, in solitude but not isolated.

Confluence

A red line divides two sides. The red line is at the core of the design of a book by choreographer and philosopher Diego Gil for the performance *Collective Writing Machines* (2012).⁴ In *Collective Writing Machines* this book performs for the audience. The red line is like a bleeding in the middle of the book, it separates different stories, different forms of writing. Narratives begin from the middle of the book and develop as the reader turns the page either forward or backward. 'The concept of the double in a book I read' (Gil 2012a:2).⁵ The concept of the double in the design of Gil's book is juxtaposed with my drawing of the workshop I co-led with choreographer Teoma Naccarato. We experimented with the concept of the double in a workshop, leading two workshops within one. For this workshop, 'Confluences. Tactile enunciations, rhythm and reading' (Gallier and Naccarato 2017), our dance practices are next to each other like two rivers. The rivers spill into each other. 'Each body of water has a unique rhythm, temperature, and composition, so the process of mixing is gradual and dynamic. Confluence involves collision, resistance, and mediation

– in context' (Gallier and Naccarato n.d.). My drawing of the workshop is inspired by ground patterns of dances of the court notated by Raoul-Auget Feuillet (1700). These notations often include parallel paths that at times spill into each other.

Hands and eyes

Triangles. There is the instrument in the performance *Together #5* (2019) by composer Alison Isadora.⁶ Hands and eyes from this performance appear on this page, cut from a folded paper designed by Aliz Soos and that Isadora distributes to her audience in the real time of the performance. Spectators unfold this paper at specific moments of the piece, moments that are relative to their perception. There is a triangle of hands in the middle of the page. This triangle draws the position of tables in the performance *In Many Hands* by Kate McIntosh (2016).⁷ There is the triangle of a table drew by Jamillah Sungkar for the edible book performing in *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018). Hands and eyes drawn by Sungkar gather on the edges of this page. The red hand of a magician adds to these many hands. It is taken from *Uit de Tover Dos* (Adrion 1981). This book was given to me by a friendly ghost: I found this book full of magicians' hands, by chance, on a give and take table in a corridor of a building in which we rehearsed. Two discrete transparent papers are also on this page. They are drawings by Nikolaus Gansterer in *Choreographic Figures Deviations from the line* (Gansterer, Cocker, and Greil 2017).⁸

4 I attended *Collective Writing Machines* (Gil 2012) at Het Veem Theatre in Amsterdam.

5 There are two pages two in this book that gathers two books in one. This sentence is to be found on the page two that is in the second half of the book.

6 I attended *Together #5* (Isadora 2019) in December 2019 in Amsterdam.

7 I attended *In Many Hands* (McIntosh 2016) in May 2018 in Utrecht.

8 I attended the workshop *Choreographic Figures Deviations from the line* in Vienna in July 2016.

Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle

The solitude of reading merged
with the collective nature of an audience

Emilie Gallier

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Chapter 0. NO ONE IN SIGHT

Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle, is practice-as-research about reading in the moment of performance. Such reading occurs when spectators take their gaze away from the action on stage to silently read the document they hold in their hands: a program for instance. At times, the audience is offered more than a program: a performative document in the form of a book, a print, an object, intended to be part of the performance. For instance, in episode five of the performance *Life and Times* (2013) by the Nature Theatre of Oklahoma, the audience reads ‘a hundred and forty page hand-calligraphed illuminated manuscript’ (Nature Theatre of Oklahoma 2013).⁹ Audience members receive ‘small leather-bound books and individual reading lights’ for an ideal reading time of ‘forty four minutes and twenty seven seconds’ (Isherwood 2013). Other examples of reading in performance can be found in the works of contemporary choreographers like – and this is a non-exhaustive list – Mette Edvardsen (2010, 2011, 2014, 2017), Alix Eynaudi (2017), Juan Dominguez (2016), the duo Alice Pons and Olivia Reschovsky (MOHA 2016, 2017), and Anouk Llaurens (2016).

9 *Life and Times* is a saga of ten episodes based on a phone conversation with a thirtyfour year old woman telling her life for sixteen hours. Episode five draws on one of the phone calls and narrates the first sexual experience of this woman, through the illustrated books spectators hold in hand. Here is a description of the book from the website of The Nature

Theatre of Oklahoma: ‘working with the devotion of 16th century copyist monks, using techniques of early medieval bookmaking, directors Kelly Copper and Pavol Liska have drawn and lettered every page of the story in glorious detail. The reading of the book is accompanied with a live musical concert on keyboards’ (Nature Theatre of Oklahoma 2013).

The practice-as-research *Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle* investigates shifts in attention and in spectatorship when the audience of dance reads in the real time of performance. What happens in dance performances when the audience is reading? That question raises two interrelated questions. What is the nature of the document, which is read by the audience? What is the quality of participation emerging from the act of reading? In examples of reading within a collective frame, I search for practices of attention that appreciate and cultivate heterogeneity of experience. The solitude of reading merged with the collective nature of an audience is at the core of my curiosity.

When they answered the bell on that wild winter night,
There was no one expected and no one in sight.
Edward Gorey, *The Doubtful Guest*, 1957

This introduction is an invitation to come in. To no one expected, to no one in sight. The door is open. Behind the threshold are the characters of this thesis. These characters are both fictional and real. They are somewhat invented and in the meantime they emerge and are inspired by my research journey over the past years. They are inspired by the practices of performance making, of collaboration, of spectatorship, and of research. They are in flesh and of paper: the readers, the hostess, the magician in doubt, the evaporated writer, the ghosts, and the dance that has never been danced. Each one of these characters is a pretext to start from a place where they have already begun, to blur the beginning and at the same time to introduce, through detours, the topics of this research. The characters are pretexts: they come before the text. They offer clues, coordinates, and sketches. None of these characters are finished or closed entities; confusion is inherent in their definitions. It is sometimes unclear whether a character in this introduction is only one person or many. I wish for the possible state of confusion to be generative of thoughts, questions, slippages, and a plurality of approaches. Slippages and plural approaches are part of my practice in conducting this research; they serve a multi-layered attention open to complexities. The (sometimes) exploded composition of this

thesis might be disorientating for readers. I wish for this construction and possible disorientation to invite readers to draw some links between the concepts and I hope for slippages to become a dance during which we may encounter new thoughts and perceive things that neither the readers nor I anticipated.

0.1. The readers

Some can be seen; many remain unseen. They read. In the time of live performances, the readers often sit comfortably, in darkness, with a personal reading light. Their eyes touch surfaces, for example: paper, screens, and bodies. They wander. They fly in the territory of their imaginations. Their hands carry, hold, turn pages, and shuffle. The readers may taste and nibble books. Bookworms. The readers enjoy their solitude. In performance, their solitudes compose with one another. In performance, the readers assume that others are reading the same thing probably in different ways. In performance, the readers form a collective presence; their gathering is not about socializing. Their readings perform on the stage of their imagination as well as on the stage they sit on.

Now, at present, the readers are probably only one reader. That reader reads a PhD thesis entitled *Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle*. This reading does not perform in a theatre, but perhaps in a library, an office, a dance studio, a house, on a chair, on a sofa, on a train, in a park, on a shelf, in a box, under a pile of forgotten papers. There is some light, but for the sake of concentration, some kind of obscurity gathers around the material. The reader engages in an activity of sense making. Vision is the most obvious of the sensorial tools at play but the reader might be touched by sounds, and might also give attention to taste, to breathing, to rhythms. The readers are present with the reading material. They are a participant of this thesis. Their presence and ability to respond contributed and contribute to the process of shaping this thesis. They contributed (in the past tense)

because there is the intention to make space for readers in this thesis. They contribute (in the present tense) because there is an invitation for readers to write in the ‘now’ of reading.

Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle asks readers to pull threads from the fabrics of the text, to add threads, to cut, to form knots, to suck threads like they were spaghetti, to weave again in other ways. Through the words of French philosopher Roland Barthes, the readers are ‘a plurality of other texts, of codes, which are infinite or, more precisely, lost (whose origin is lost)’ (1974:10). The readers produce what they read; they are implicated in the production of what they read. I am interested in this implication of the reader in relation to the activity of the spectator of dance.¹⁰ How do spectators produce what they see? Together with the readers in performance and the readers of this thesis, I study reading in parallel with audience-ing, where reading is:

not the reactive complement of a writing which we endow with all the glamour of creation and anteriority. It is a form of work ... and the method of this work is topological. I [reader] am not hidden with the text, I am simply irrecoverable from it ... Reading does not consist in stopping the chains of systems, in establishing a truth, a legality of the text, and consequently in leading its readers into ‘errors;’ it consists in coupling these systems, not according to their finite quantity, but according to their plurality (which is a being, not a discounting). I pass, I intersect, I articulate, I release, I do not count. Forgetting meanings is not a matter for excuses, an unfortunate defect in performance; it is an affirmative value, a way of asserting the irresponsibility of the text. (Barthes 1974:11)

Barthes suggests the readers are plural entities irretrievable from the materials they read, which are as well plural and open. In a similar way, spectators are irretrievable from the performances they attend. Dramaturge Goran Sergej Pristaš defines theatre as an art that ‘always already includes the viewers and their viewing ... theatre is a poetic set or conjuncture of viewers and actors in performance (living and non-living)’ (2018:37).

¹⁰ I refer here to research about dance spectatorship taking place in the field of performance studies and of performance practices.

The readers are entangled with what they read. The readers write in the present. This co-writing status represents the irresponsibility of the text and the responsibility of the readers. The readers are entangled objects and subjects of this practice-as-research. Some can be seen; many remain unseen. Some are living; many are not. The readers are implicated agents. They afford ways of engaging and of searching, implicated as audience in the event of theatre.

0.2. The hostess

Whereupon the host shall be master in his house no more:
 he shall have carried out his mission.
 In his turn he shall have become the guest.
 Pierre Klossowski, *Roberte ce Soir and the Revocation
 of the Edict of Nantes* 1965, 2002

‘The hostess asks her guests to perform the levitation trick.’¹¹ This character welcomes her guests in indirect ways. There is in her behaviour a strange hospitality. The hostess avoids eye contact. She eats books. She renders books; as she opens her mouth above bowls of water, paper blooms out like a flower. With a half-smile, she locates the magic inside her guests. The hostess drools on the table. She barely speaks. She brushes her hands and generates magnetism. She holds her hands one centimetre above the table. She disappears. She gazes in precise directions where there is nothing to see.

The invented character of the hostess in the performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018) inspired me to glance at hospitality through the perspective of French writer Pierre Klossowski and his three novels on hospitality. There is a crucial sense of impossibility as well as of violence and absurdity in the practice of hospitality that Klossowski depicts:

¹¹ This sentence is pronounced by performer Camille Gerbeau in the performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018), which is the fourth chapter of this thesis. See also *Papier incomestible* (Gallier 2020).

For with the stranger he welcomes, the master of the house seeks a no longer accidental, but an essential relationship. At the start the two are but isolated substances ... But because the master of this house herewith invites the stranger to penetrate to the source of all substances beyond the realm of all accident, this is how he inaugurates a substantial relationship between himself and the stranger, which will be not a relative relationship but an absolute one, as though, the master becoming one with the stranger, his relationship with you who have just set foot here were now but a relationship of one with oneself. To this end the host translates himself into the actual guest. (Klossowski 1965, 2002:13)

The impossibility in this practice of hospitality lies in one becoming the other. The violence and absurdity are in the method: Klossowski's host practices hospitality by offering his wife to strangers. The hostess of *Papier multiforme*, *Papier comestible* and the hostess in this thesis resolutely differ from Klossowski's. Yet, this thesis' hostess too is inspired by a few impossibilities. Performance maker and researcher Danae Theodoridou writes: 'the bad thing with experience is that it can't be transferred ... Performative words. Their experience. It can't be transferred' (2010:13). It is impossible to become the other. Likewise, it is impossible to transfer how the other experiences words, text, or performance. I would add that it is impossible to see what others imagine while being in performance. The hostess of this thesis is motivated by impossibilities linked to being together, living and non-living actors, in performance.

The hostess reads. I read in my mother tongue, French, and I read in English. My thoughts build upon my experiences as a spectator, as a reader, as a choreographic artist. I eat books. I render books. I digest multiple resources and after digestion, I write in a language that is not mine. This language reminds me that I am a foreigner. It maintains distance. It helps me to question the nature of the words I use and encounter. My use of English brings up odd usages of words and expressions, odd syntaxes, and bizarre associations. At the risk of misunderstandings, I wish for the strangeness of my writing to

become inviting and to support the perception of the presences of other languages and voices, for the text to show its plurality. Like artist researcher Volmir Cordeiro puts it: '*il est question de travailler l'hétérogène*' ('it is about labouring the heterogeneous' *my translation* Cordeiro 2019:10).

In writing and compiling materials for *Reading in performance*, *Lire en spectacle*, I am the author, the 'expert' in the matter of research. This expertise results from an individual path, certainly limited. I practice (including reading and writing) from where I am, geographically (I am French, I live in the Netherlands, and occasionally work in England) and culturally (I am a white woman who grew up in the countryside within a supporting and loving working-class family).¹² As an artist-researcher, I practice between the dance studio, the theatre stage, the proscenium, some conference rooms, and the desk that offers me a seated life conditioned by the chair and the computer in a world of words. If I am a hostess for this thesis I ask the guests to perform the all-too-well-known levitation trick. As a hostess, I work together with the readers, the magician, the writer, the ghosts, and the dance that has never been danced. Yet, like curator Rachel Lois Clapham tells us about her process when making the collection of texts (*W*)*reading Performance Writing*, I am aware that 'the nature of an invitation – made by someone, someone with permission, to someone else possibly without – inevitably creates something of a map ... that circles around me' (2010:38). Despite this, I want my intention for polyphony to be explicit: I wish to acknowledge the sources I cite, 'conscious' sources, the ones I cannot trace anymore, forgotten, the ones I don't know about, unconscious, the ones readers bring in, the co-written.

¹² No need to point out the fact that both the geographical and cultural descriptions of where I write from are insufficient, but perhaps they indicate some coordinates.

0.3. The magician in doubt

‘The magician has arrived early. The other guests are still to come. They have been lured by the promise of magic. The magician has been lured by the promise of an audience. She certainly wouldn’t mind an audience.’¹³ The magician rehearses, waits, and expects an audience. The magician spends a lot of time ‘imagining an audience, imagining one’s self.’¹⁴ This audience the magician expects, is a major actor, irretrievable from the performance. At lonely rehearsals, the audience is inside the magician – imagined. At the theatre, the audience also surrounds her. The promise of magic is known by all. The presence of the lure is known by all. Like performance scholar Augusto Corrieri (also known as magician Vincent Gambini) puts it, the audience performs a double task:

to know that everything they are witnessing is illusory and unreal, and to simultaneously allow themselves to be utterly amazed by the impossible feats taking place before their very eyes. What is rehearsed with the advent of conjuring is a certain kind of ironic dis-belief, a paradox of *detached immersion*, whereby spectators are asked to experience true enchantment whilst remaining fully aware of the illusory construction underlying it. (Corrieri 2018:15 *my emphasis*)

The magician instigates doubt and ‘provokes critical spectatorship’ (Beckman cited in Corrieri 2018:15). The magician simultaneously provides scepticism and enchantment. Is there any magic when reading in performance? Is there doubt, *detached immersion*, and critical spectatorship?

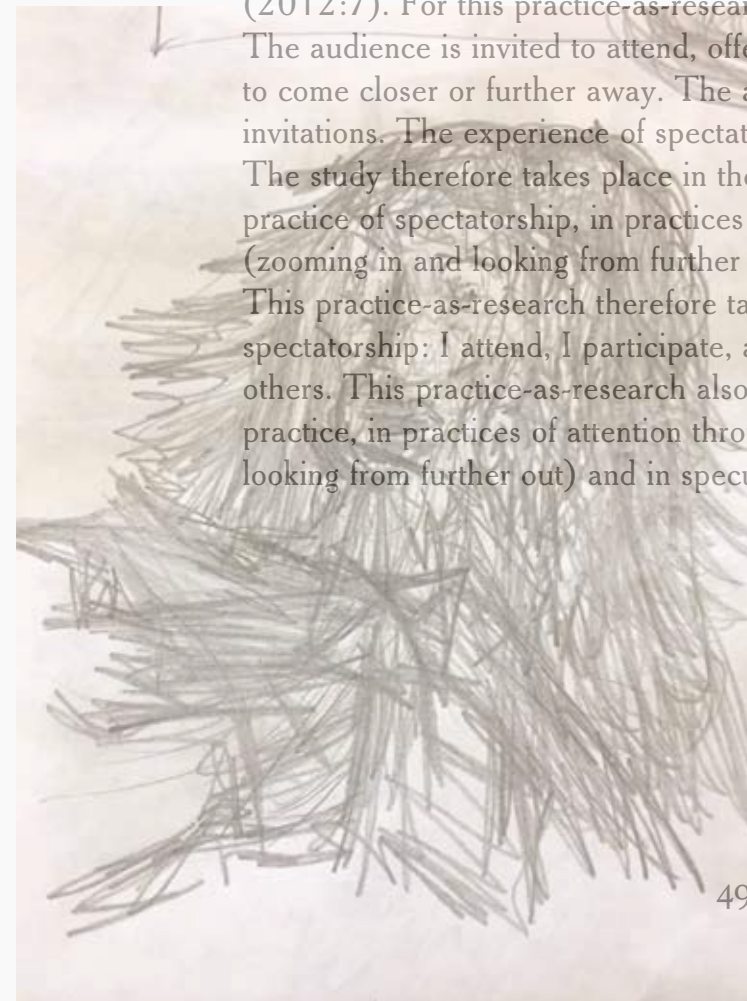
‘Imagining an audience, imagining one’s self’ the magician seeks control, to ‘sculpt and edit the path of attention of the audience’

13 These sentences are pronounced by performer Nina Boas in the performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018), which is the fourth chapter of this thesis. See also *Papier incommestible* (Gallier 2020).

14 In the recorded talk *Imagining an audience, imagining one’s self* Augusto Corrieri, aka magician Vincent Gambini, talks about magic books, misdirection, solitude and the gaze in response to *Papier multiforme, papier comestible* being performed in Amsterdam (Corrieri 2018b).

(Corrieri 2018b). In the frame of this practice-as-research, this sense of control is displaced. If there are many attempts at sculpting attention throughout the practice and the writing of this thesis, sculpting tools and gestures are exposed, and the experiences of the audience members and the readers remain out of reach for me as choreographer and researcher. Not knowing the experience of the audience is a committed position behind this research. In this study of qualities of participation emerging from reading, the experience of the audience is neither measured nor quantified contrary to many approaches of research in the field of participatory performance. According to art historian Claire Bishop ‘the positivist sociological approach to participatory art (as proposed, for example, by cultural policy think-tank studies that focus on demonstrable outcomes) is inadequate’ (2012:7). She claims the importance to ‘reinforce the need to keep alive the constitutively indefinite reflections on quality that characterize the humanities’ (2012:7). For this practice-as-research, the audience is not questioned.

The audience is invited to attend, offered possibilities to hold books, to come closer or further away. The audience can accept or decline invitations. The experience of spectators is kept within their intimacy. The study therefore takes place in the practice of performance, in the practice of spectatorship, in practices of attention through distances (zooming in and looking from further out) and in speculative practices. This practice-as-research therefore takes place in my practice of spectatorship: I attend, I participate, and I read in performances of others. This practice-as-research also takes place in my choreographic practice, in practices of attention through distances (zooming in and looking from further out) and in speculative practices.



0.4. The evaporated writer

In her quest for the guest
 Our writer evaporated
 Leaving her book with no story
 But presences and clues
 Journeying to her ghost
 Our writer wanders in a forest of hands
 Before she dissolves
 She gleans from other books
 She is free not to appear
 Emilie Gallier, *Papier incommestible*, 2019

The writer is discrete. In the environment of the hostess and of the magician, she observes. She is sensitive to what is not seen in this context, she looks for what rests in darkness. She uses darkness and applies it on paper to generate contrasts of flat tints. Contrasts make her writings, her drawings. The writer is sensitive to presences unseen. She names them the guest.¹⁵ Inspired by the *Doubtful Guest* of Edward Gorey (1957), by the theatre's black box, and by a piece of large black paper hanging in the middle of the stage for the installation of *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018), she depicts the guest as a dark creature. The dark shape sneaks between readers, providing them with individual reading lights, editing their view, at times, blocking the view, turning into wind and messing up loose pages. The writer composes with tints, with void and with silence. She keeps secrets, she hides text, refuses to explain. She summons up a world of worlds. She absorbs the territories of the magician, of the hostess, of their encounter, of the space where they meet, of her imagined readers, of the guest. She makes space for these territories on paper. Yet, she makes this space, this surface, fragile. She chooses a paper that dissolves: edible paper.

¹⁵ The switching from plural (presences) to singular (the guest) is intentional. I wish to point to the plurality of presences that make up the guest.

Her book 'is a pile of edible pages. Therefore it is perfectly possible for it to disappear.'¹⁶ The writer knows that the invisible she sheds light onto might need to vanish and return to invisible realms. The writer is, in turn, also pulled by this invisible dimension. She evaporates, trying to free her book from authorship and from origin, from a beginning or an end. The writer does not bind the pages of her book, she leaves them loose. She dreams of a *free* book, a *free* document.

0.5. The ghosts

A GUEST + A HOST = A GHOST
 Marcel Duchamp, *A Guest + A Host = A Ghost*, 1953

This pun by Marcel Duchamp was printed in black capital letters on shiny green candy wrappers at the occasion of William Copley's exhibition in 1953 (Carre n.d.). This pun is a poetic and humorous manifestation of the morphing of the guest and the host into a ghost. The wordplay contains many layers of interpretation. The impossibility for the host to be one with the guest, leads to a disappearance in the form of a ghost. Furthermore, the text 'a guest plus a host makes a ghost' speaks to the materiality of its support, the candy wrapper. The wrapper hosts a candy. After use by a guest it turns into waste, a ghost. I present here Duchamp's playful writing to manifest the intricacy between form and content, and to express the importance of humour in this thesis. I believe magic – despite its consideration as a low form of theatre¹⁷ – introduces some lightness in the thinking about participation. In the same way, I think that puns – despite their consideration as 'low form of wit' (Duchamp cited by Kuh 1962:89) – are tools in writing, thinking, and creating with plurality. Puns offer many levels of meaning. They show there is always more than what meets the eye, more than what reaches the page.

In the performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018), the host tells the guests: 'You will be ghosts. In the margins of

¹⁶ Sentence from the book which performs in *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018). See *Papier incommestible* (Gallier 2020).

¹⁷ Corrieri writes: 'Magic – think playing cards, wands, and coins that inexplicably transform, levitate and

multiply – is a very particular theatrical activity. That is, if it even passes for theatre. Barring a handful of recent exceptions, magic has received no attention from theatre scholars' (2019:1).

the giant book. Discrete and invisible.’ The host should perhaps rather tell the guests: ‘We will be ghosts.’ As ghosts, hosts and guests read from the margins. From there, they see what may have dropped off the book or did not even enter it. The ghosts negotiate with the unconscious part of creation. The ghosts negotiate with the invisible in choreographic works.¹⁸

As artist researcher, my experience is that choreographic performance meets discursive research on rather contentious terrains. The first claims its own position with no need for explanation, while the second tries to claim something and requires different articulation. When choreography and written discursive research meet, different subjectivities meet. Cordeiro writes about choreography and research: ‘nor the one nor the other can fully express itself. The one doesn’t support the other sufficiently. At times, they can’t stand each other’ (2019:25 *my translation*).¹⁹ Within my practice-as-research, the performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* grows from a long process that shares with methodologies of academic research.²⁰ Yet, its mode of expression is live performance. Considering the written thesis, the performance is the fourth chapter. But once performed, it becomes a gap in the thesis. It vanishes and leaves an empty space. To the view of many readers of this thesis, *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* is a ghost.

Far from the idea that performance should not be documented (documentation is one core subject of this research), I argue that the best form for this performance to contribute to the discussion in the thesis is the live form performed in the theatre rather than some documentation used merely as evidence. Through this last provocation, my intention is to challenge the function of documentation as evidence. Academic institutions, theatre venues and production houses for performing arts tend to encourage full-length mono perspective video documentation of performance works. I resist this tendency and opt for a different approach where documentation takes many forms and carries many functions. *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* is present in many ways throughout the thesis. For example, it inspires the characters in the present chapter. It is present through the partition inserted in chapter four ‘Papiers.’ The performance and its process also inspire

18 See ‘Ghostings: the Hauntologies of Practice’ (Whalley, Miller 2016).

19 Cordeiro writes in French: ‘Deux subjectivités différentes se rencontrent alors: celle de l’artiste, et de son autoanalyse, avec celle de l’œuvre et de son processus. Ni l’une ni l’autre n’arrivent à pleinement s’exprimer. L’une ne porte pas suffisamment l’autre. Parfois, elles ne se supportent pas’ (2019: 25).

20 I identify bridges between academic methods and my practice through my reading of *The Craft of Research* (Booth, Colomb, and Williams 1995). One of these bridges consists of a common thirst for problems, and for dealing with the unknown.

the format of the thesis with regards to the display of images. In the stage set of the performance, there is a piece of four-by-six-meter black paper hanging. This paper separates the flat empty space in two. A magic performance unfolds on one side, and a reading performance takes place on the other side. For the performance, there is a world of illusions and images on one side of the dark paper, and a world of printed matter on the other side. Similarly, there are separate spaces in this thesis, spaces for different modes of reading. There is a world of text and argumentation on one side, and there is a world of scores, drawings, images, choreographic writing on the other side. This second world, which is rather visual, is presented in this thesis as if it were a book within the book or another facet of one same object. ‘I’ve another side over on this side.’²¹ Both visual and textual worlds require distinct forms of attention. The habits of image illustrating the text or text explaining the image are discouraged.

0.6. A dance that has never been danced

The dance that has never been danced refers to documentation in performance: reading materials that are read in the real time of performance. These reading materials are performance writings considered as latent performers. ‘What if the writing were to openly interfere with the live piece?’ asked Clapham (2010:36). Performance writings ‘forward an intervention of language and of reading which destabilises and refocuses the processes of looking and/or of listening’ (Clapham 2010:37). The research *Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle* is a study of documentation through an investigation of performative documents.²² It focuses on forms of documentation that engage the audience’s experience of reading in real time, in which reading becomes a complex and multi-layered – cognitive-sensory-

21 This sentence is recurrently chanted in the performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018).

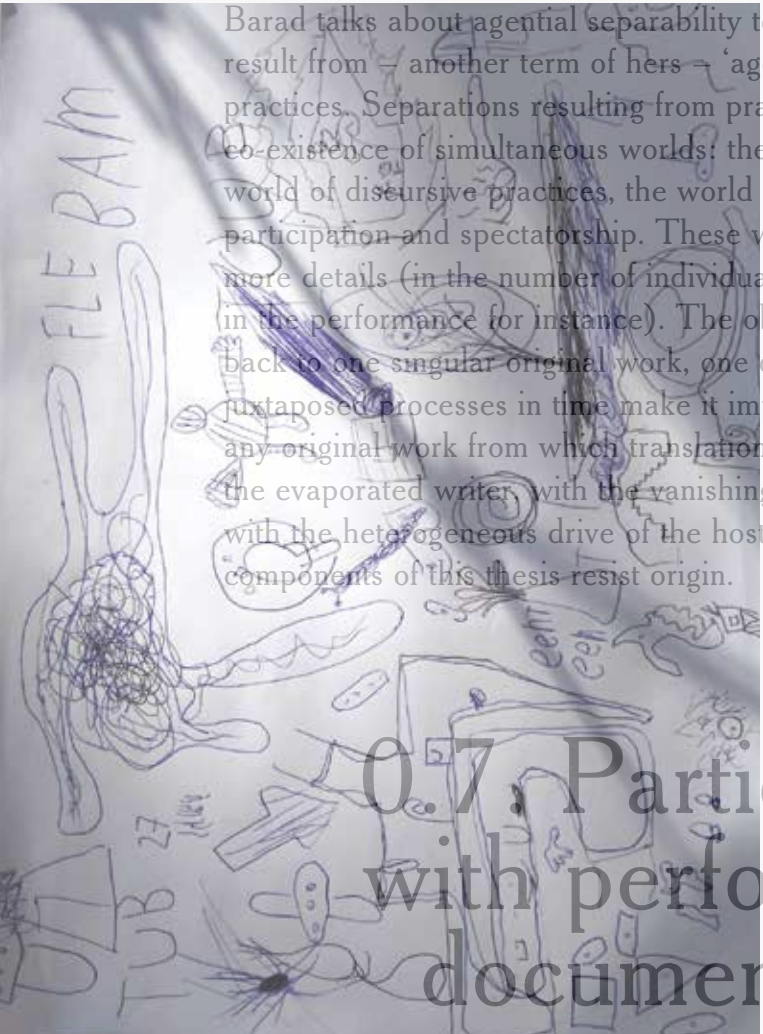
22 I use the term documents to refer to the writings that perform. These documents encompass more than language. They are open and include the materiality of their support.

kinaesthetic – means to understand and unpack spectatorship. The dance that has never been danced knows many names: performance writing (Clapham 2010), archive as agent, scrap-book (Bleeker 2017:203), scripted conversation (Müller 2018), script (Müller 2012), book (Edwardsen 2009, Nature Theatre of Oklahoma 2013), zine (Eynaudi 2017), choreographic object (Forsythe 2008), notebook (Eynaudi 2018), cards (Foellmer, Protopapa 2018), screen (Kaldor 2016), ‘Papier comestible’ (Gallier 2018), diagram, blackboards schematic drawing, drawing, stage instructions, Labanotation, visual poem, experimental fiction, critical prose, charts (Berridge 2010), living books (Edwardsen 2010), dance notations, mysterious shadows, imperfections in the paper, score, papers, a secret indecipherable code, hieroglyphs, cabalistic signs of black magic, tracings, poor papers, old programs (Louppe 2010), facsimile, document, absorbed territories, booklet, chapbook.

This thesis hides secret dances in contrasts, in the margins, in structures. The unconventional approach in this thesis – for its graphic pages, its ghosts and its poetic composition – is not about displaying marvels of creativity nor the greediness of all possible outcomes. My choices of format for this thesis respond to the need to work with the support of the discourse as inherent in the discourse. Feminist theorist Karen Barad writes:

Matter and meaning cannot be severed. In my agential realist account, matter is a dynamic expression/articulation of the world in its intra-active becoming. All bodies, including but not limited to human bodies, come to matter through the world’s iterative intra-activity, its performativity. Boundaries, properties, and meanings are differentially enacted through the intra-activity of mattering ...

Responsibility, then, is a matter of the ability to respond. Listening for the response of the other and an obligation to be responsive to the other, who is not entirely separate from what we call the self. This way of thinking ontology, epistemology, and ethics together makes for a world that is always already an ethical matter. (Barad interviewed in Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012:69)



Barad talks about agential separability to mention the separations that result from – another term of hers – ‘agential cuts’ resulting from bodily practices. Separations resulting from practice allow in this thesis the co-existence of simultaneous worlds: the world of score practices, the world of discursive practices, the world of live performance, the world of participation and spectatorship. These worlds themselves contain many more details (in the number of individual scores, chapters, and objects in the performance for instance). The objects in this thesis cannot lead back to one singular original work, one dance. Numerous iterations and juxtaposed processes in time make it impossible to trace or designate any original work from which translation phenomena occur. In line with the evaporated writer, with the vanishing tricks of the magician in doubt, with the heterogeneous drive of the hostess, and with the ghosts, all components of this thesis resist origin.

0.7. Participating with performance documentation

Up to here, in this chapter zero, we have met characters. Readers, the hostess, the magician, the writer, ghosts, and the dance that has never been danced, indirectly introduce concepts that interrelate within this thesis. In other words, the characters play together in the shared space formed by *Reading in Performance*, *Lire en Spectacle*. This space is on the threshold between the broad and intensely discussed concepts of performance documentation and audience participation. The act of reading sits between these two not exhausted yet rather tired fields of research. In this practice-as-research, reading is a hyphen between

documentation and participation; reading is a method that – through juxtaposition and frictions – might destabilize traditional conversations about performance documentation and audience participation. Reading is a verb, which for this research carries the preference to focus on the relationship between performance documentation and the audience, rather than to focus on the relationship between performance documentation and performance. Reading also manifests my preference to study discrete forms of participation that scholar Sruti Bala calls gestures of unsolicited, vicarious or delicate participation (Bala 2018). Rather than choosing spectatorship or participation as framework, this study puts reading at its core and includes spectatorship and participation in its scope because reading might happen in both contexts.

The preference for a focus on the relationship between performance documentation and its audience follows scholar Philip Auslander who claims that ‘the ontological relationship between performance and its documentation is far less interesting and significant than the phenomenological relationship between the document and the beholder’ (2018:15). This inclination also follows a subjective experience coming from my practice as a choreographer and dancer involved with documentation in the form of scores, artists’ writings, and responses. I feel more curiosity for how documents need me as a reader than for how truthful these documents might be.

The relationship between the document and the beholder provokes questions about complex relationships unfolding within the event of a performance. Interested in relationships between implicated agents of performing arts, I join Bala’s incentive to observe how we participate when we are not asked to participate: ‘what does it mean to participate in art beyond the pre-determined roles and options allocated to us?’ (Bala 2018:112).

I discuss participation and documentation bringing examples from the field of expanded choreography in which dance does not always manifest in a conventional form²³ and the audience is included in the performance. The examples I discuss all relate directly or indirectly to a continuation of the inclusion of documentation practices in performance.²⁴ These examples address documentation as performance itself (where,

for instance a book is a performance) and conversely performance is proposed as a practice of documentation.

This practice-as-research looks at specific practices in Europe, as stimulation for thinking about reading and the reader, to elaborate on the tension between participation and spectatorship. Bishop talks about this tension alongside other tensions present when discussing participatory art: active/passive, artistic critique/social critique, real life/art (Bishop 2012). My research continues to challenge the active-passive dualism and talks to the tension between participation and spectatorship. What kind of participant is the reader? What kind of spectator is the reader? In *Artificial Hells*, Bishop proposes an evolution of the participatory audience in history as crowd (1910s), mass (1920s), people (1960–1970s), excluded (1980s), community (1990s), and volunteers (2000s) (2012:277). She addresses the problem of voluntary subordination of the audience to the artist’s will, the commodification of human bodies in a service economy, and participation taking the form of an ‘endless stream of egos levelled to banality’ (Bishop 2012:277). What words might I employ to define the audience who reads in performance?

²³ Including a stage and a proscenium.

²⁴ About the inclusion of documentation practices into performances see *Indelible* Ellis, 2005.

0.8. Fifteen graphic pages, eight chapters, and image crumbs

This thesis is composed of fifteen graphic pages (*Papiers voisins*), eight chapters, and image crumbs. The book that holds these materials has taken different shapes. In the last year, this book was bound. Then its spine was removed, allowing shuffling the pages anew, in order to break the illusion of a genetic chain leading to this thesis as document. Unbinding this book once, enabled freeing it from a temporal linearity that followed an order of emergence, and freeing it from the logics of academic frameworks within which it developed. While holding recognition for these relations, this thesis seeks to practice what I named *free* documentation, embracing the complexity of a making situation and foregrounding the act of reading.

Chapters are presented in an oscillation between different modalities of writing and of composing texts, between academic forms and choreographic forms for instance. Bookworms, readers are invited to embark on repetitive back and forth movements. These iterative gestures encourage meeting the same practices many times through different angles. As one hostess and through my multi-layered approach to practice-as-research, I weaved the materials in this thesis and I bound this book anew. This binding should not be mistaken for linearity though. In the company of characters introduced in this chapter, readers will encounter wormholes enabling readings through the thickness of the book. There are wormholes to dive into and wormholes yet to be dug and nibbled.

In the first chapter, 'A retreat into silence,' I build upon my experience of spectator for the performance *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* by Mette Edvardsen (2010) and upon my conversation with the choreographer (Appendix 2017). I situate

the reader within the landscape of research about participation and spectatorship. I depict a context for the reader where participatory arts are criticized, where participation fails (Kunst 2016), and where spectatorship is put into question (Peeters 2014). I then contextualize the act of reading as a practice of attention. Lastly I introduce my proposal for *free* documentation drawing on Philip Auslander's essay 'The performativity of performance documentation' (2006).

Chapter two, 'Holding nothing together,' articulates as a glossary that aims to characterize what happens in performances when the audience reads. Some characters of this chapter zero reappear next to some verbs and adjectives that allow them to become the subjects of longer sentences. I draw on anthropologist Michael Taussig's concept of the 'public secret' (1999) to imagine documentation and performance as a two-faced monster. I argue that in reading in performance, this two-faced monster is invoked. I suggest that this double presence generates implicated gestures of participation; a kind of participation that composes with absence and withdrawal. Informed by views on imagination by poet Wallace Stevens (1951), philosopher Gaston Bachelard (1988) and graphic-novelist Nick Sousanis (2015), I propose to see events of reading in performance as places and times where agents of performance are hosts, ghosts, invisibly dancing with others, implicated in the imaginations of others, practicing entanglements.

For the third chapter, 'Where images surface,' I draw on my experience as a participant in the performance by Alice Pons and Olivia Reschovsky *The Roof* (2016). I think about the kind of theatrical space in which events of reading in performance occur. I seek an understanding of the participation or of spectatorship that this kind of space presuppose, drawing on writings by philosopher Jacques Rancière (2009), dramaturge Goran Sergej Pristaš (2018), and choreographer Julien Bruneau (2018). I examine reading in relation to the attention that is expected in this kind of theatrical space. Observing examples of reading in performance in which the document has gone or dissolved, I research the physical edges of what I call *free* documentation. I imagine the possibility for documentation to perform in its very absence.

Chapter four is the live performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* that premiered in 2018 in Amsterdam. For most readers of this thesis, this performance is a ghost that haunts *Reading in Performance, Lire en Spectacle*. This performance is part of a collection of performative forms: *Les Papiers*. Chapter four holds the space for these practices.

Chapter five is 'Time and time again.' I ask: what is the participation of documentation in events of reading in performance? I research time(s) in documentation in relation to time(s) in performance (Auslander 2018, Phelan 1993, Schneider 2011, Ellis 2005). Looking once again at the examples of practices by Mette Edvardsen (2010), by Anouk Llaurens (2016), and by Alice Pons and Olivia Reschovsky (2017), I observe reading as a tactic enabling all agents of performance to have time to settle with the performance, to return to it, and to be transformed by it. I investigate the kind of time that is specific to events of reading in performance. I observe the simultaneities in place when reading in performance.

In chapter six, 'Read. Move. Implicated.,' I describe the lecture *Read. Move. Implicated.* that I created in 2015. I present my approach to knowledge in the field of artistic research: the concept of not knowing (Borgdoff 2008), the vision of knowledge as symptom (BADco 2012, Kastanic 2011), and the relation to problems (Cvejić 2015, Milat 2011). I present my vision of practice: it manifests at multiple levels and through multiple angles. For this practice-as-research, practice consists of my making practice, others making practices, and my practice as a spectator. Practice is a live performance, a book one cannot eat, a poem, an edible book of loose pages, a thesis, two lectures, scores, many collages, a laboratory, a workshop, research presentations, silent readings, phone performances, and countless conversations. I want to listen to resonances without forcing them or interrupting them. Public occasions are opportunities to present problems and at the same time to 'chew' these problems with others. I research while I present my research. In this sixth chapter, I describe and root this spirit of experimentation: the thinking through practices, through multifaceted objects, and through public iterations.

Chapter seven, 'No intention of going away,' is this thesis' epilogue. I recapitulate the characters' positions and actions in an enmeshment between their life in the performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (2018) and their life in this book. I then indicate coordinates that did not find other places in this thesis: I confront my reflection on reading in performance to two encounters. On the one hand there is the encounter with my six years old son who does not 'know' how to read and yet who reads the edible book 'Papier comestible.'²⁵ On the other hand there is my encounter with a spectator of dance who, born blind, experiences his practice of spectatorship in a non-ocular way, in sensorial and extra sensorial qualities of implication with others. I search larger implications of reading in performance and I hint at future developments of this research: how may readers as worms contribute to cultivating living soils and diversity in the economies and ecologies of performing arts.

25 The edible book that performs in *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018).

Chapter 1. A RETREAT INTO SILENCE

1.1. Audience: in the failure of participation

READERS SIMPLY READ

I have been a reader and spectator of the performance work of choreographer Mette Edvardsen since I first encountered it in February 2012. Back then, I entered the old library of the Pintohuis in Amsterdam to attend Edvardsen's performance entitled *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* (THFAIAS 2010). As I enter the library, I announce myself at the desk and I am picked up by a book (a human performer!). The book takes me to the first floor where I then sit side by side with her, facing the window, listening to her. 'I am *Answered Prayers* by Truman Capote,' she says. She recites pages until her

memory stops feeding her. I experience a peculiar form of participation, or a strange spectatorship induced by my awareness of being a reader while my living book is also a reader, but a reader who spent an incredible amount of time and effort with the material that gathered us that day. I experience us as sitting in front of a third thing: the book that has been learned by heart. Because we are both readers, I feel at that time like an emancipated spectator next to an emancipated performer. I am emancipated from catching a message and she is emancipated from communicating it.²⁶ We both read. In March 2017 I opened another book: *Verzamelde Gedichten* by Hans Faverey at the Stedelijk Museum of Amsterdam (*THFAIAS* Edvardsen 2010). In May 2017, I am in the Galerie Ravenstein in Brussels to ask Edvardsen about reading and participation. I ask: is *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* a participatory performance? She responds:

There is something with this focus on participatory, which sometimes, I find difficult. It is a bit symptomatic of how things are in our time: things are direct, we do it, we do it, and then we feel we are engaged but I think that is a false impression. When I am sitting in the dark in the theatre I am as much a participant as when I have to go and engage. This fake idea of 'now we are doing something together' can be for me emptier than only listening to someone or looking. There is an obsession of including and letting people participate, with which I have a problem. I also feel there can be really important and good things about that, but it is also an easy thing to use, and it can actually be quite empty.

In our case, I really don't think participation is a thing. In a sense you could say that *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* is a super classical set up. It is not classical because we are not sitting in the theatre but it is a performance with an audience, which is receiving and we don't need anything else from the audience than to listen. Whether we have an exchange at the end or not is not important. Someone who wrote about my work associated it to relational aesthetics. This performance has nothing to do with relational aesthetics. If I make the reading of the book

to a person and this person stands up and leaves, I am happy with that. The performance is not instrumental for us to be able to speak together, so that finally there is this social moment. It is almost like everything is fitting into this current regime of the world: every moment has to be facilitated, it is difficult to have any space, and everything is a bit the same thing. In *THFAIAS* the social aspect is not important. If we can have a chat in the end it is good. But I am doing poetry. This is art, and it stands without the chat. (Edvardsen Appendix 2017)

While aspects of performing arts at large – like the attendance and co-presence of people – form potential affinities with participatory arts, it is common to observe in performance artists a resistance towards participation. A few key frictions that often surface in discussions with performance artists about participation do arise in the above fragment of conversation with Edvardsen. The pressure for physical actions by participants, the instrumentalisation of the audience, the artificiality of relations, and the pressure for social exchanges add to the critique of participation. This critique is symptomatic of what Bishop refers to when she suggests criticism of participatory arts might be a trait of participatory art itself: 'better examples of participatory art have constituted a critique of participatory art' (2012:283). My intention here is not to label performance works that I observe, like *THFAITAS* (Edvardsen 2010), as participatory. It is rather to examine the critical resistance to the participatory in order to observe the spectator and the participant as readers within this landscape where participation and spectatorship are put into question.

NO TO PARTICIPATION, YES TO SPECTATORSHIP?

Clean Room is a long-term performance project by Juan Dominguez and his collaborators,²⁷ developed between 2010 and 2016, as a four-season series with six episodes per season. The audience of one season attends six performative events over five days. The second episode of *Clean Room*'s third season is called the 'Book gathering;' spectators gather to read 'at the same place and for more or less the same amount of time' (Dominguez, Pérez Royo 2017:16). The project *Clean Room*, proclaimed as 'non-participatory,' paradoxically researches the condition of the spectator who is 'committed, addicted, protagonist, thinker, accomplice, co-author' in a 'shared experience' (Jerez in Dominguez, Pérez Royo 2017:29). Dominguez's work aims at 'making a different kind of audience possible' (Dominguez, Pérez Royo 2017:23). Cultural theorist Valeria Graziano tells of Dominguez that he wants to change the conditions for the spectator 'without transforming them into participants of an experience which is already coded' (Graziano in Dominguez, Pérez Royo 2017:341). Graziano distinguishes the participant from the spectator because in her view, the experience of the participant is pre-determined by the performance while the experience of the spectator is not or less predetermined. The spectator appears freer than the participant.²⁸ This does not imply that there is no exercise of power within spectatorship; the experience of the spectator is determined by implicit theatrical conventions developed over centuries. In my reading of Graziano, she does not critique the explicit directives that are used within the context of participatory arts to frame the engagement of participants. She rather addresses the implicit conventions that condition the participant's experience. In her article about *Clean Room* 'Dares as ethical operations,' Graziano asks:

How to shift the parameters of engagement and encounter with its audience in such a way as not to simply replicate the modalities of interactivity and participation constantly elicited by social media and marketing strategies in the form of free labour? (Graziano in Dominguez, Pérez Royo 2017:343)

27 *Clean Room* is a project by Juan Dominguez, developed in collaboration with: Maria Jerez, Alice Chauchat, Arantxa Martínez Guests, Victoria Pérez Royo, Alejandra Pombo, Emilio Tomé, Fernando Quesada, Anto Rodríguez, Sara Manente. See <http://juandominguezrojo.com/performances/clean-room-4/>

28 In her distinction between the participant and the spectator of performance, Graziano expresses the polarity spectator/participant that Bishop presents as one of the 'polarities' on which the discourse on participatory art is founded (Bishop 2012:278).

Graziano draws a parallel between strategies of participation in participatory performances and free labour. I understand free labour here in relation to the service economy where – in the words of performance studies scholar Shannon Jackson – 'labour spheres, both aesthetic and otherwise, are told to perform, that is, to reorient and retain their labour force to provide "experiences," "services," and "affective" relations as a primary product' (2014:55). In the context of the service economy, immaterial experiences, affects and attention are primary products. Free labour also relates to what Bishop calls unpaid labour, which she depicts as characteristic of participation in the twenty-first century (2012:277). Bishop explains that through this unpaid labour the participant is a volunteer co-producer of the work and that this position can be seen positively as 'increased agency of the audience' or seen negatively as symptomatic of 'the commodification of human bodies in a service economy' (2012:277). What Graziano denounces, like Edvardsen in our informal conversation, is the instrumentalisation of relations. There is in these reflections the suspicion that participatory art replicates the ways institutions organize sociability and the suggestion that performing arts should critically interfere with the experiential regimes exerted today. These reflections then suggest a need to maintain a distance between art and the social. In this light, performing arts do not produce social exchanges, are not about processes of communication or transmission but rather processes of simultaneous practices (of performers and of spectators).

The philosophy of Rancière sustains this tension between art and the social by challenging the polarity between the author and the spectator. He challenges the presupposition that the author speaks to the spectator through her work, and that the author and the spectator are then unequal in front of the artwork. On the contrary, Rancière proposes to think of the author and the spectator as equal interpreters of the performance. Rancière builds his thought on Joseph Jacotot's claim that 'one ignoramus could teach another what he himself did not know' (Rancière 2009:1). Contrary to a pedagogy where the master owns knowledge and keeps one step ahead of the ignorant student, the ignorant schoolmaster teaches something she does not know. From this

instance, Rancière points at the equality of intelligence – the ability to learn (Rancière 2009:10) – between the master and the student. By comparison, he argues for the equality of intelligence between the artist and the audience, equally able to draw their interpretations of the performance work. At stake here, is that knowledge (in pedagogy) and performance (in performing arts) do not belong to someone more than someone else, but are shared practices of sense making. Involved in practices of interpretation, artists and audience emancipate from having to be social. Performers perform without the pressure of communicating to the audience, and spectators attend without deciphering an original message. My proposition is that this distance enables differences in interpretation and criticality. Furthermore, if this equality and distance occurs between artists and audience, I suggest it also occurs between artists and art institutions enabling criticality, and possible transformations (of both artists or institutions) at the service of the performance. Refraining from further speculation, let us return to the examples of *THFAITAS* (Edvardsen 2010) and of *Clean Room* (Dominguez et. al 2010).

THFAITAS and *Clean Room* are proclaimed (by the artists making them) non-participatory works separate from social critique. Yet they propose particular forms of spectatorship. In Edvardsen's piece, the model of spectatorship is quite classical indeed. Edvardsen told me that *THFAITAS* 'is a performance with an audience which is receiving and [she does not] need anything else from the audience than to listen' (Appendix 2017). Yet the one-on-one format, where one makes an appointment with a book-performer, and where both spectator and performer are readers – with very different roles – does something to the way one experiences spectatorship. In Dominguez's project, there is the articulated wish to 'experiment the transformation of spectatorship' (2019). Not participatory and offering critical experiences of spectatorship (intended or not) these works do not articulate a social critique. These pieces generate questions about how artists and audience look, attend, and participate, becoming implicated in the work.

Returning to Graziano's quote connecting participation with free labour, I suggest that not to replicate institutionalized modes of

participation would mean facing institutional and creative anxieties about the non-measurability of participation (leave the spectator alone!), and perhaps to find new ways of negotiating the qualities of participation. This implies that the non-measurability of participation affords a new form of participation that is different in kind. Bala talks for example about unsolicited, vicarious, and delicate gestures of participation (2018). Bala speaks to both participation and spectatorship by asking, 'what does it mean to participate in art beyond the pre-determined roles and options allocated to us?' (2018:1)

AGAINST HOMOGENIZATION

There is growing interest in the field of participatory art ...

There is an equally vehement rejection of participatory practices, particularly in relation to their disregard for respected conventions and modes of experience in the arts, but more broadly, in terms of their appropriation and dilution into contemporary models of neoliberal, entrepreneurial governance. (Bala 2018:3)

Participatory arts which, for Bishop, counter the 'dominant ideological order – be this consumer capitalism, totalitarian socialism, or military dictatorship' (2012: 275) are accused of reproducing what they criticize. As Bala observes, participatory arts are being reproached to work hand in hand with 'neoliberal, entrepreneurial governance' (2018:3). The neoliberal apparatus affects participatory arts. Edvardsen said in 2017: 'it is almost like everything is fitting into this current regime of the world: every moment has to be facilitated, it is difficult to have any space, and everything is a bit the same thing' (Appendix 2017). With the growth of participatory arts comes a homogenization of participatory arts. Performance theorist Bojana Kunst explores this homogenization in 'The Institution between Participation and Precarization' (2016). Her example reveals that the development of norms of health and safety compromises and affects the artistic work.²⁹ This example is the reconstruction of Robert Morris' exhibition

29 The ways norms of health and safety affect artistic works is striking in the current pandemic.

Bodyspacemotionthing in 2009, originally presented in 1971 at the Tate Gallery. The exhibition consists of very large-scale props with which the audience interacts. In 1971, the exhibition had to be closed after four days due to the many accidents happening with the enthusiastic audience. In 2009, a series of measures reduced the risks associated with the installation, there were only minor injuries, and the exhibition lasted three weeks.

Artwork here has to comply with a complex series of measures for safety – a series of normative regulations – that would enable undisturbed play and participation of the audience and would immunize them against dangers, especially when they are most vulnerable: exposed in their play with others who are also playing. Now let us allow ourselves to speculate a bit and ask for the end: would the so-called participatory turn in art today be possible at all if the regulations for safety and measures taken for protection were not so highly developed? (Kunst 2016:12)

Kunst suspects a connection between the rise of participatory arts and the growth of a culture of protection. In her view, there are more participatory artworks because risks are managed and accidents prevented. For Kathy Noble, curator of the Tate exhibition in 2009, the development of participatory arts is also enabled by the fact that: ‘audience have more experience in these participatory works, institutions are more prepared’ (Noble cited in Westerman 2016). In 2009, the audience were protected and they ‘behaved,’ they respected the safety rules, while in 1971 they disobeyed the how-to instructions that accompanied the installation ‘using the works in any way they wanted’ (Westerman 2016). Is participation only possible in contexts where docile participants are protected by the hosting institutions? Systemic and encoded norms, rules for protection, are like the codes Graziano denounced: they pre-define participation, and dispossess the participant and the artist from their encounter with the work.

In Kunst’s view, the rise of participatory art connects with the development of protective norms, which – in her view – connects with the normalisation of precarization as defined by political theorist Isabell Lorey (2011).³⁰ Governmental precarization refers to modes of governing through social insecurity, flexibility and fear. Lorey observes that:

Modern ‘subjects’ embody liberal-democratic modes of governing through self-governing, through the way they live. Participation is the ‘motor’ of this governmental biopolitics, but not in the conventional sense as political participation, but rather as fundamentally taking part through self-government. Specifically through the way in which they conduct themselves, govern themselves, individuals become socially, politically and economically controllable and regulable. (Lorey 2011:np)

After Morris’ exhibition in 2009 at Tate Modern, the curator Kathy Noble observed the audience has changed since the 1970s, being more used to participatory arts. This is an example of what Lorey calls the embodiment of modes of governing: audiences embody modes of governing. Kunst draws a parallel between participation and precarization, and reflects on the role of the institution between participation and precarization. Showing that institutionalized sociality contributes to an audience’s embodiment of modes of governing, she claims that participatory art fails when it is said to be underpinned by a critique of the dominant order. Reading Lorey, who explains that one dimension of the precarious is humans’ existential condition as being mortal and social beings, Kunst argues that in some cultural contexts, our existential precariousness is no longer a state of equality within which ‘we in our vulnerability are actually not alone’ (Kunst 2016:9). But being governed, vulnerability merges with fear and then supports modes of domination. Kunst’s critique is that institutions protect audience members from others and from their own participatory experience.

30 Lorey distinguishes three dimensions of the precarious. *Precariousness* refers to human’s existential condition of the precarious: as being mortal and social beings, needing others to survive. *Precarity* refers to the utilisation of precariousness by the state, creating

inequality in precariousness and hierarchisation. *Governmental precarization* refers to modes of governing through social insecurity, flexibility and fear (Lorey 2011).

DARING INSTITUTIONS AND READERS

Participatory art fails when it perpetuates socialized isolation, 'where being with the other is possible only with a thorough protection of the self' (Kunst 2016:9). Kunst points out a paradoxical situation: in the attempt of rehearsing sociality and addressing politics of spectatorship, participatory art feeds a pre-written sociality, which results in a 'radical individualisation as well as homogenization of subjectivity' (2016:8). Kunst concludes there is a need for change in cultural institutions engaging with participation. A need for:

stubborn institutions ... which would not create clouds of experiences that can be easily whipped away and replaced with the new ones, but that would spread the practices and materialize the actions. The institution of such a kind would not work towards continuous immunization, but actually deeply disturb the smooth operations of social logistics today and intervene with their material strength, because they would also be able to be changed and influenced by what they create, organize and put into practice. (Kunst 2016:13)

In this light, the necessary distance between artistic critique and social critique is complemented with a distance between artistic proposition and the institution. This means the institution makes space for the artistic critique without intervening by framing the artwork. In the meantime, institutions are implicated with the work, ready to be changed by the practices going through them.

Kunst's argument is an incentive to investigate qualities of participation that disobey 'this perfection, where vulnerability is not exposed to be protected, but where in vulnerability we are actually not alone' (2016:12). Kunst proposes 'constituent immunization' as a response to the systematic self-immunization described by Lorey, and as cure to isolation: '[it] is the turn to this other that was formerly constructed as a threat' (2016:10). 'Constituent immunisation' is a mode of resistance consisting of integrating the threat, being part of it,

implicated with it, in order to become immune. Kunst calls for fearless, daring institutions (2016:13). This relates to what Graziano writes about the project *Clean Room* (Dominguez et. al. 2010). Graziano proposes to think of 'daring as a mode of caring for the counter-conduct of others where the other is a resistant subject focused on producing itself differently' (2017:342).

The intuition behind this practice-as-research *Reading in performance*, *Lire en spectacle*, is that it is daring to read in performance. Reading in performance resists pre-defined circuits of attention. I intuit that there is in the act of reading such quality of implication with others, where one might be changed by others and also change them. At the same time there is in reading a critical distance, the possibility for detached immersion. Reading in performance is a non-measurable quality of participation, happening in the solitude of readers and yet defying isolation. The solitude of reading means spectators and participants do not talk together, do not really read together, but they read at the same time as others. I will develop in chapter five 'Time and time again' the importance of this simultaneity, but for now I want to examine how reading relates to how audiences look and attend in the real time of performance.

1.2. Reading: levelled out into looking and attending

INTIMACY, DEDICATION, LOVE

As my conversation with Edvardsen continues, I share with her my reading of French writer Daniel Pennac. In *Comme un Roman* (*The Rights of the Reader* 1992, 2006), he tells the story of a child's first love with reading, which is followed by disillusion, fear and resentment. Inspired by Pennac's story, Edvardsen tells me:

One day my daughter understood she could read. There was the magic of that moment. She would say 'now, mum you lie down.' She would sit and she would read for me. But then she realized: 'if I can read myself you are not going to read for me.' I observed in her this moment of discovery, the pleasure, the joy of reading. I was fascinated. I told her 'you know we still read, you can read, and I can read. Sometimes we can be next to each other, you read your thing, I read my thing, and sometimes I read for you.' Through this project [*Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine*] adults can be moved. I think it is because it brings something from memories, from childhood maybe; but also this dedication, the fact someone is taking this time for you. Someone speaks to you by heart. You understand that this moment has a lot of time behind it. Some people say it is like a gift. Sometimes it can be that people cry. Many people speak about this moment 'when my mother stopped reading for me.' Reading for each other is such a nice thing, why would we stop? (Edvardsen Appendix 2017)

There is a gift of time in encounters with reading: time given to each other, time spent in the company of others, dedicated time. To sit, to lie down, to hold, to embrace; these are gestures of reading, some invented rituals that generate pleasure, a 'total gratification of the senses' (Pennac 2006:163). My interest in reading in performance is motivated by these qualities of the movements of reading: sensorial, gestural, intimate. My interest is also motivated by the connection of reading and love. Pennac writes: 'more often than not, the books we loved best we read because of the people we loved best' (2006:87). Another reason to focus on reading is its connection to silence, which does not relate to the absence of sound in reading – since one might read out loud – but to a resistance from straightforward communication. Like Pennac writes:

Reading is ultimately a retreat into silence. Reading as communication? Another daft joke from the pundits. We keep quiet about what we read. Our enjoyment of a book remains a jealously guarded secret. Perhaps because there's no need to talk, or because it takes time to distil what we've read before we can say anything. Silence is our guarantee of intimacy. (Pennac 2006:85)

Despite these listed qualities of reading – love, intimacy, and silence – Pennac observes in his story about a child's transition into adolescence, how pleasure may evaporate and turn into a rejection of reading. Pennac blames the 'fear of not understanding' for this rejection (2006:119). Similarly, in the context of choreography, when reading is attached to meaning and induces expectations of communication, it may generate fear. The bond between reading and meaning does not make reading an obvious friend for dance. Dance historian Laurence Louppe writes:

Dance, and above all contemporary dance, does not produce definitive figures. It provokes *acts*. We know that the analysis and transmission of *acts* does not come about through the *sign*, but rather through the contamination of 'states' whose movement develops the degrees and qualities of energy, its tonalities.

The reading, the capture of such givens can only be immediate. It suffers no delay, nor any passage through a grid of translation. Movement is most certainly readable, but its phrases are to be grasped flush with the organic and perceptual tissue that gives them birth. (Louppe 2010:10)

Louppe's argument about the impossibility for signs to transmit acts is challenged in the light of Austin's theory of language's performativity (1962) and of further studies of the performativity of images (Sousanis 2015, Auslander 2006 and 2018). Yet, Louppe's account of the difficult relation between dance and signs does reflect some reality. It reflects the fact that reading may demand specific qualities when it relates to dance. Louppe asserts that movement is readable. But this certainty is immediately brought into question and rendered fragile by the fluidity of the reading tools, which are organic, perceptual, and detached from the sign. Louppe notes that with dance 'the very process of signification dissolves' (2010:11). When the reader arms herself with a tactile gaze, with eyes that let images surface rather than eyes that decipher some original message, reading may find its place with dance.

READING LEVELLED OUT INTO LOOKING

The potential distancing of reading from understanding in dance, conflicts with the spectator's possible desire to interpret dance performances. This desire to interpret aligns with a vision of the relation between the author and the spectator in performance where the spectator deciphers what the author communicates. But like I pointed out a few pages ago (in 'No to participation, yes to spectatorship?') one can consider, following Rancière, that the author and the audience are equal interpreters in front of the performance and that in this sense there is no one singular thing to decipher.

Dance critic and dramaturge Jeroen Peeters writes about 'the spectator's stubborn urge to *read* and *interpret* dance performances' in relation to his assiduous observation of Belgian choreographer Alexander Baervoets (Peeters 2014:39 *original emphasis*). In the 1990s' Baervoets found it necessary for dance to emancipate from reading and from the heritage of text-based theatre. Baervoets searched for another gaze he called 'pure looking' (Peeters 2014:41). Following Baervoets, Peeters proposes to distinguish reading from looking, where reading is a focused way of seeing and looking is a diffuse attention freed from interpretation and propitious to the context of dance. To look does not exclude the possible presence of images, but it disconnects these images from meaning. 'The images are there, but they do not reveal any meaning; instead they commit themselves to dance' (Peeters 2014:43). For Peeters, to look involves a diffuse attention opportune to the activation of 'different grounds' (2014:44). His choice of words is not fortuitous; the grounds to be activated are references to Jean-François Lyotard's philosophy. Lyotard distinguishes what he names the *figure* from the *ground*; the determined figure stands out against the ground, which in contrast is not determined but unfocused. Building upon Lyotard, Peeters suggests that in performance, reading (that he associates with the determined figure) goes hand in hand with looking (that he connects to the open ground): to construct meaning works together with the 'unburdened act of looking' (2014:45).

Continuing the philosophical linkage between reading and looking, and my reflection about the position of reading within dance performances, I asked Rancière about the difference between the activity of the reader of fiction and the activity of the spectator of dance. He responded that 'when we read a fictional work, the writer tells us what it is about, what happens; so we know what happens' (2017b). For Rancière, the reader knows. He continues:

What is specific perhaps to modern dance, not always but in many cases, is that you don't know what happens. And the question then is: what happens? Dance appears to us as a kind of language, but a language we don't exchange, it opens a kind of communication, but

it never says what happens. Although one might discuss this, one might say words become important in some kinds of contemporary dance. But what I find interesting is: when we are a spectator of dance, what is important is the relations between two things: the activity of movement and the activity of the art. For me it is important because sometimes dance is thought as movement that must generate movement: the idea that the spectator must also be put into motion. What I think is important perhaps is to change a bit this perception of the thing. Saying that what is proposed by dance, to somebody who is sitting or to somebody who is standing, is not simply movement, the energy of the body, but a series of images. (Rancière 2017b)

In front of a series of images, the spectator's gaze is both physically and mentally involved. Peeters names this gaze: 'reading levelled out into looking [...] a mobile gaze, a mental double' (2014:50). In Rancière's view, the spectator of dance is free to look at what is happening only in terms of movement but she is also in the presence of images, images that are to be organized. The spectator of dance is then like a translator of a language that she does not know. She is given series of images that she carries with her in her reveries.

For this research *Reading in Performance, Lire en Spectacle*, I examine reading as one gesture the audience makes in the specific cases of performances that offer something to read (in the form of a document to hold in one's hands for example). This reading takes place at the same time as looking at dancing bodies, as being and breathing in performance, as seeing images, listening, and attending. The reading I observe in this research differs from the reading of the dancing body; it is the reading of something other (a thing or a *nothing* that I will start describing in the end of this chapter). But I assume that this reading in performance is affected by – and may affect – the existing relation between reading and dance. In this research I observe reading in performance as a quality of participation that is informed by the broader perceptual action of looking and by the freedom of the spectator of dance in front of images that surface.

A PRACTICE OF IMMANENT ATTENTION

'There is no performance without attention' (Kunst 2016:10). The context of performance, defined by attention and co-presence, affects the kind of reading happening in performance. Conversely, reading in performance as quality of participation, might add to discussions over the last twenty years about the crisis of attention. Many thinkers denounce this crisis as being caused by the treatment of attention as a commodity (Berardi 2009, Citton 2017, Crary 1999, Crawford 2015). Philosopher Franco 'Bifo' Berardi writes: 'attention is under siege everywhere' (2009:108).³¹ The research *Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle* relates to this broader context. I suggest though that reading in the moment of performance aligns to yet another paradigm of attention. In contrast to the vision of attention as a finite resource and as a selective movement that narrows perception, reading in the real time of performance joins a culture where attention is seen in a movement of expansion of perception. Reading in performance begins an act of layering attention by diffracting the sources of attention: there is the dancing body, there is the document to read, there is the chair to sit onto, there is the person sitting next to me, etc. Performance scholar Laura Cull Ó Maoilearca in her lecture 'On Attention' at Independent Dance in London, explains this attention paradigm building upon the philosophy of Henri Bergson and the practice of Allan Kaprow (2014).

Bergson is interested in a notion of attention as that which precisely broadens or extends our field of perception, working towards a greater inclusion rather than exclusion of worldly sensations and particularly opening us up to the perception of change and movement. (Cull Ó Maoilearca 2014:6)

Bergson approaches attention as that which includes 'worldly sensations' by means of processes of immanence with what is being attended. In Kaprow's art, this process is an embodied practice enmeshed with the ordinary of life, with 'the apparently uninteresting or banal' (Cull Ó

31 Participatory performances are often criticized for how they reproduce an overabundance of stimulation of attention, for how participants are pushed to act. 'It is a bit symptomatic of how things are in our time: things are direct, we do it, we do it' said Edvardsen (Appendix 2017).

Maoilearca 2014:9). What Cull Ó Maoilearca names the ‘Kaprow/Bergson paradigm’ positions attention as being ‘a thing in itself (rather than a mere effect of the sum of human discourses) ... a process rather than a static object’ (2014:11). Attention is a dynamic thing, a moving with the attended as opposed to a capture and immobilizing of the attended. This attention concerns subjects and objects, the attended and the attendees. The attended generates attention and produces subjectivities. Cull Ó Maoilearca concludes:

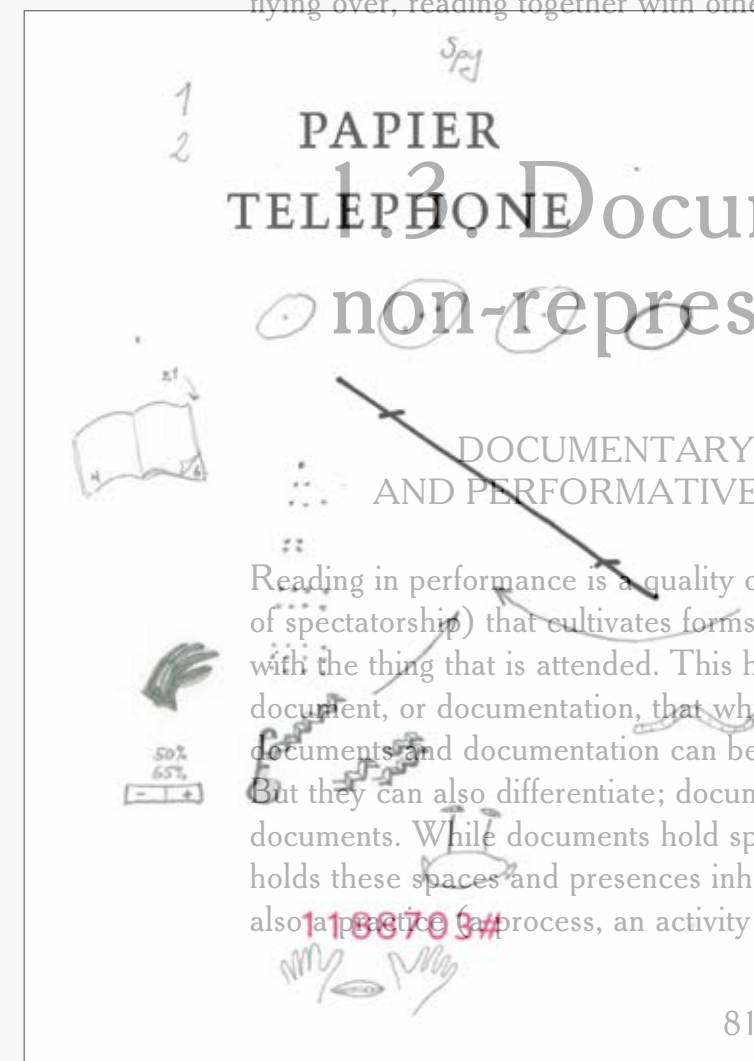
Attention is not about a decision to think harder, look harder about *x*, rather attention occurs when an unexpected *y* forces us to think anew (Cull Ó Maoilearca 2014:12).

This view of attention includes inattention, the other side of attention, the ‘unexpected *y* forces’ or in other words what attention leaves in its shadow. In my understanding, this other sides of attention³² is like a retreat into silence by pointing less, by ceasing to manage and to regulate perception.

The solution here to the crisis of attentiveness is not a question of bringing more power of attention or perception (more consciousness, more representation) to the thing, but ironically less of these representationalist elements: less selection and more a kind of immersion in the object understood as a process ... Concepts don’t come from us and project themselves on to the object here, but move in the other direction from the object to us – the attended is attending us, the object is thinking us. This is the nature of an expanded perception or an attention without the blinders that restrict it in consciousness. (Cull Ó Maoilearca 2014:11-12).

One could presume that situations of reading in performance, including at times the physical presence of a document to read, do guide the spectator’s attention, pointing at what to look at or eventually telling them how to read the live performance. I argue throughout this thesis – from my experience as a spectator, a reader, a participant,

from my practice as a choreographer making reading materials for performance, and from my readings of discourses – that the thing to read in performance does not function this way: documents in performance do not represent. They are not yet another representation of the performance or any representation. They are performances in performance and these performances function through the act of reading, the doing of reading in an immanent engagement with the thing (or the nothing) to read. In our conversation about *THFAITAS*, Edvardsen tells me that in this performance, she is the book she learned by heart. In this performance, books are not selected for what they could represent, the library of living books is something other than what the books are about. The books in *THFAITAS* induce a walk through, flying over, reading together with others (Edvardsen Appendix 2017).



32 See 'L'attention et ses envers' (Pecqueux 2020).

classifying, of making documents).³³ The relation between documents and their readers is not unilateral. The attended impacts on the attendees and vice-versa. The media shapes its users and vice-versa. Documents and documentation perform. The performativity of performance documentation has been demonstrated by scholar Philip Auslander (2006). He writes:

Perhaps the authenticity of the performance document resides in its relationship to its beholder rather to an ostensibly originary event [...] It may well be that our sense of the presence, power, and authenticity of these pieces derives not from treating the document as an indexical access point to a past event but from perceiving the document itself as a performance that directly reflects an artist's aesthetic project or sensibility and for which we are the present audience. (Auslander 2006:9)

Auslander challenges the subordinate status of documents. The document is autonomous. It is not merely a description of a past event but it *does* in the present – in Austin's sense of the term *to do* (Austin 1962).³⁴ The document produces 'an event of performance' (Auslander 2006:5). It becomes the stage for impossible things to happen: for example a man levitates in Klein's *Leap into the Void* (1960), the continuity of time is disrupted in Acconci's *Blinks* (1969). Continuing Auslander's impulse on performative documentation, and motivated by my brief exchange with Rancière who talked about the free spectator of dance, I investigate what a *free* documentation would be.

Rancière suggested that when we read fiction the author tells us what happens, we know what happens, while in dance we are not told what happens, we do not know. In parallel with this relation between fiction and dance, I question the relation between different forms of dance documents. When we read dance documents, when and how does the author tell us what happens? I would assume authors tell us what happens in the frame of conventional documentation that archive a past event for example. This conventional documentation is like the *documentary* documentation Auslander analyses: a form

33 I suggest thinking documents as spaces and documentation as practices.

34 For Austin, the verb *to do* is a performative action. It falls within performative utterances that 'do not "describe" or "report" or constata anything at all, are not "true or false" ... the uttering of the sentence is, or is a part of, the doing of an action, which again would not *normally* be described as saying something' (Austin 1962:5 *original italics*).

of documentation, which feeds an ontological relation and a mutual dependence with a previous event of performance. Documentary documentation archives, allows for re-enactment, and gives evidence of something that happened. For other forms of documentation described by Auslander – *theatrical* documentation on one hand and *performative* documentation on the other hand – it is not so easy to establish whether authors tell us what happens or not. Auslander defines theatrical documentation as a form of document in which the performance occurs only in the space of the document. The performative document surpasses both the documentary and the theatrical because it locates authenticity in the relation with the beholder, and not in the 'original' event (Auslander 2006:9). It is not easy to tell if the authors tell us what happens in theatrical and performative documentation because, like dance, these forms may be elusive and call for some effort of organisation by the reader. This effort of organisation can be described as – borrowing Rancière's words – some translation by 'a translator who has no dictionary and composes out of what he or she sees ... the translation of a text still to be written, in another language, by those who look at it' (2017:121-122). The effort of organisation by the reader of performative documentation is a translation of a thing that has no end.

FREE DOCUMENTATION

Dance artist Anouk Llaurens defines poetic documentation as a multi-focal documentation, which includes polyphonic knowledge (Llaurens 2017). This other term qualifying documentation and this other vision of documentation contributes to my articulation of *free* documentation. Imagining the relation between *free* documentation and the documentary, theatrical, performative and poetic, I propose the following equation as a start:

Free documentation = (documentary documentation + theatrical documentation + poetic documentation) x performative documentation.

Free documentation combines the collection of past experiences, the importance of the space of the document, the polyphony of knowledge, with care for its relation to its reader. Artist researcher Simon Ellis talks about hypermedia documents to designate polyphonic and multiform documentation where the user, the reader, is involved in the practice of sense making through ‘montage and juxtaposition’ (2005:145). There is room for the readers and the ghosts. In this light, my equation needs revision:

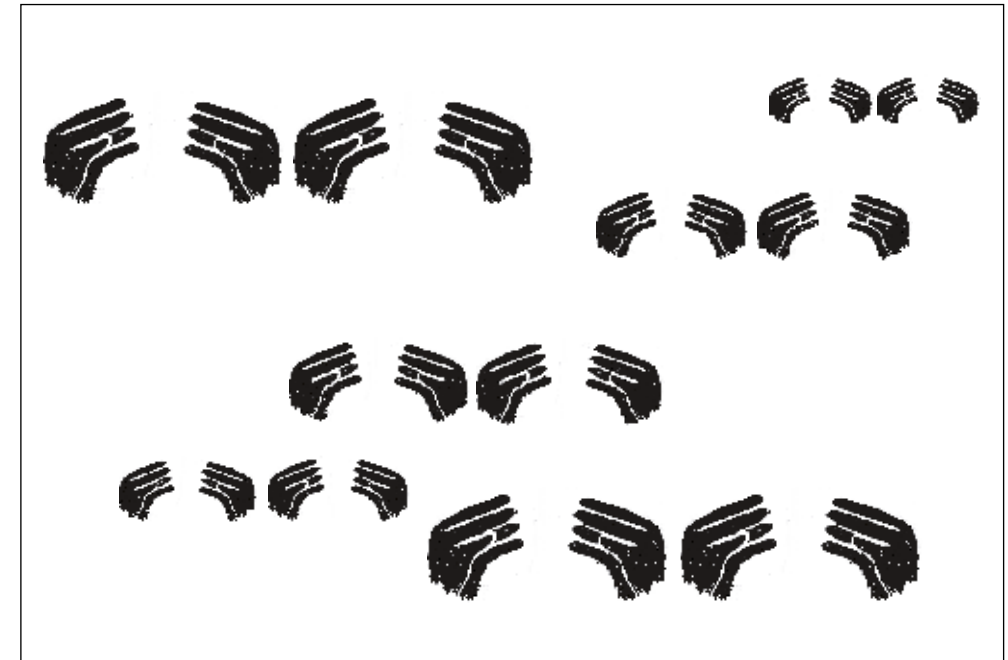
Free documentation = (documentary documentation + theatrical documentation + poetic documentation) x performative documentation + the readers and the ghosts.

Readers of *free* documentation, just like spectators of dance, are not told what happens.³⁵ Readers of *free* documentation organize images for themselves or create some kind of translation in their present times, in their present encounters with the document. *Free* documentation captures intentions and parameters, translates again and again, offers multiple possible organizations, and creates distance from the already plural sources. I propose to imagine a documentation that is not defined by its subordinations. Yet, this documentation provides a paradigm for relation in that it is always connected to something else, connected to someone else. *Free* documentation is read in performance and as performance. It has relations to the past, it is a space in itself where impossible things can form, and it is a polyphony. It is destined to readers or ghosts but it has no destination.

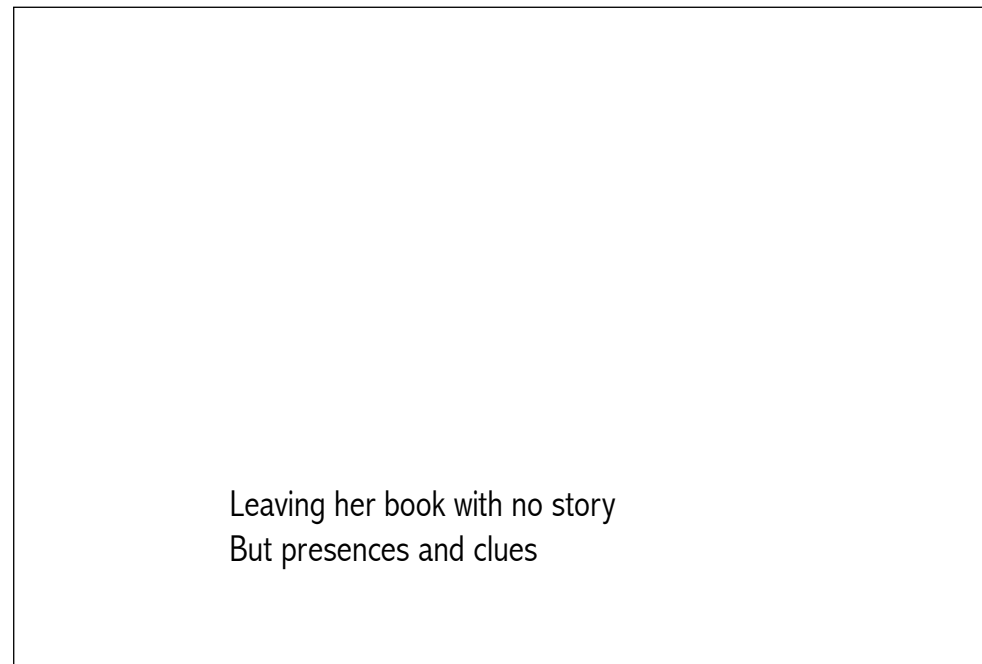
35 Rancière suggests in his comparison between readers of fiction and spectators of dance that the readers of fiction are told what happens. The use of words and grammar readers learned to decipher might indeed give the impression that readers of fiction are more

‘told what happens’ than spectators of dance, yet Rancière’s statement could be put into question since there is for some literature more than others still a lot for the readers to organize themselves.

Chapter 2. HOLDING NOTHING TOGETHER



Papier incommestible (Gallier 2020:np)



Leaving her book with no story
But presences and clues

Papier incommestible (Gallier 2020:np)

Reading dance on a page is in my experience an enigmatic occupation, not evidently useful, nor meaningful, but a little absurd like eating a part of a plate itself. In my readings of dance documentation I have noticed that dance on paper often offers itself through loose pages. This inspired me to think of a *free* document which I imagined to start with as a document free of any binding. It is as if dance would defy physical binding.³⁶ These observations result from a personal trajectory and random encounters with dance documents and documentation practices. When I learned Labanotation from Noëlle Simonet at the Conservatoire de Musique et de Danse de Paris in 2008, we spent long weekends standing in dance studios with loose A4 pages in our hands.³⁷ These were copies of scores of dances like *Totem Ancestor* (1942) by Merce Cunningham, *Trio A* (1966) and *Chair Pillow* (1969) by Yvonne Rainer, and many others. The scores on loose pages were not only notations of choreographies; they were also often notations of exercises choreographers practiced. After acquiring a few reading tools to

³⁶ I like to associate dance to this strange character in Edward Gorey's book *The Doubtful Guest* who appears and accumulates strange behaviours, for example tearing out pages from books and eating plates (1957).

³⁷ Labanotation, also called kinetography, is a system for writing movement that was published by Rudolf Laban in 1928.

decipher the notation, I remember the feeling of getting to touch distant dance practices from their depths. The scores brought temporally and physically distant practices closer to me, and more importantly I felt they opened a possibility to access core principles of the practices. These practices were for example dance exercises by Mary Wigman, Isadora Duncan, Doris Humphrey, and Martha Graham. There were also dances of teachers practicing in the same building, a few walls away from the studio where we read our dances on paper. Whatever the sources were, loose pages released a mysterious glossary of movements, vocabularies underlying multiple choreographic ways.

2.1. Loose

Whatever the temporal and physical distance was between what we were reading and me, the loose and poorly printed A4 brought me inside these practices. I slid on the pages and fell into the practices of others. I experienced what Auslander expresses when he writes that performance documentation brings performance to us.³⁸ More than a displacement of performance to me, more than the question of access, I also experienced a shift in perspective. Not only did the work come closer, but also I was not merely looking at it from the outside. I was both looking and touching at the same time. Holding loose pages of dance scores in my hands, I was both viewing the dance practice (from a distant perspective) and – using Auslander's word – I was *reactivating* it (from an inner mental and physical perspective). I was distant and absorbed at once; in Auslander's words I cumulated 'a spectatorial position' and 'the performer's embodied perspective' (2018:99). Auslander writes:

Reactivation, as I understand it, is something the audience for a reproduced artwork or performance does – not something that simply happens when we behold a reproduction ... It seems

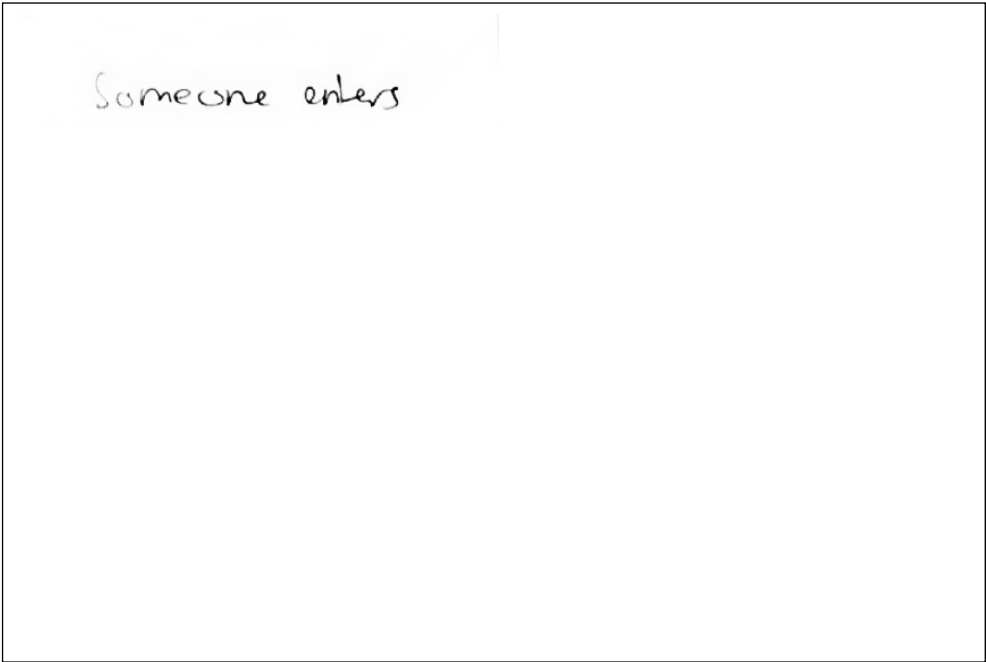
³⁸ Auslander writes: 'Reproduction of a performance ... brings the performance to me, to be experienced in my temporal and spatial context' (2018:46).

to me quite clear that beyond mental reactivation, modes of corporeal engagement with reproduced performances respond to the “participatory longings” that performances evoke, constituting another kind of reactivation. (Auslander 2018:98)

2.2. Rights

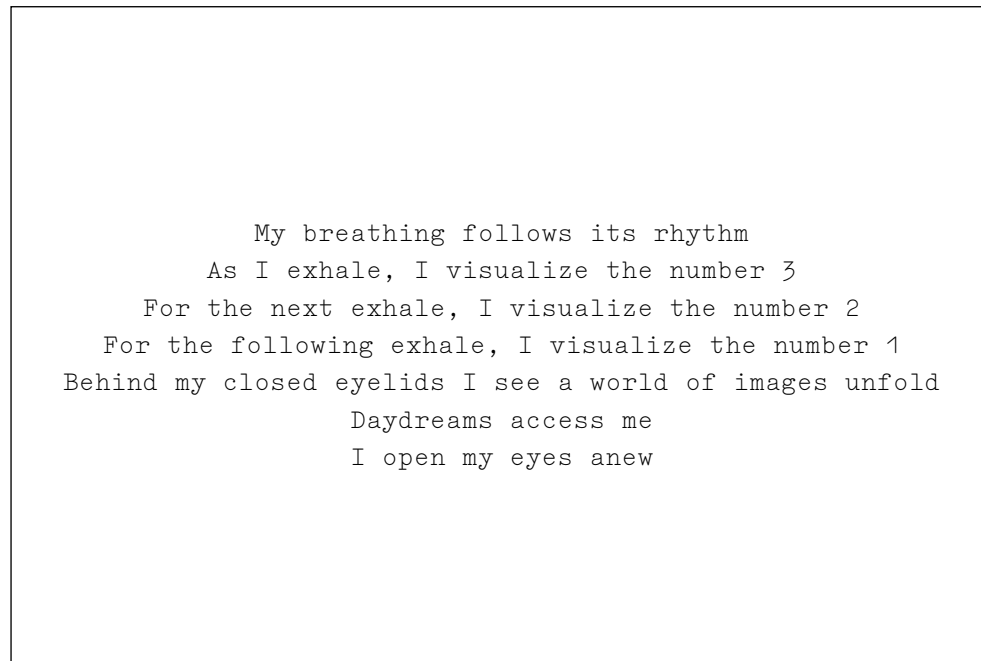
My experience with loose documents is the result of a particular moment in time: my teachers made photocopies of photocopies of photocopies and we, the students, picked pages from piles to construct our documents. Probably attracted by this form, I later sought out more loose documents of dance. Choreographer Alice Chauchat presents a set of loose cards in a box for her *Dance of Companionship* (2014) that she defines as a ‘practice of being with’ (2014:np). *A No Can Make Space* (2013) is a book by choreographer Daniel Linehan. He made this book as if it were a dance piece. He ‘arranges the writings according to seven themes, treating the composition of the book as he would treat the composition of a dance.’³⁹ As a result *A No Can Make Space* is one book made of seven books where loose components can be juxtaposed, placed on a flat surface side by side, interchangeably. *The breathing archive* (2016) by Llaurens is a pile of loose crumpled printed A4. I won’t continue this list because I do not mean to demonstrate any attachment of the loose form with dance documentation. Rather I suggest that dance documentation could take as many forms as dance affords. Yet I remain interested in what loose pages allow readers to do. In my experience, loose pages desacralize the space of the book and in so doing make it possible for the reader to exercise her rights. I use this word here in reference to Pennac who listed *The Rights of the Reader* as follows:

1. The right not to read.
 2. The right to skip.
 3. The right not to finish a book.
 4. The right to read it again.
 5. The right to read anything.
 6. The right to mistake a book for real life.
 7. The right to read anywhere.
 8. The right to dip in.
 9. The right to read out loud.
 10. The right to be quiet.
- (Pennac 2006:145)



Papier incombustible (Gallier 2020:np)

39 See the selling page of Linehan’s book (2013) for its description: <<https://hia-tus.org/projects/a-no-can-make-space-2013/>>

Score *Breathe and daydream*

The right to shuffle, to compose, to juxtapose, to steal, to jump, to search for an order, to crumple, to fold, to turn, and to set all pages side by side on the same plan. These are gestures that in my case result from my love for these documents, leading to collage and citations of the ‘old’ with the ‘new.’ Building upon my practice of reading and of making loose documents, I write this second chapter in the same way I would compose a document of loose pages. ‘Holding nothing together’ is a chapter of hypothetical loose pages about imaginary journeys and relations taking place within an audience of spectators readers. Loose pages breathe. As spaces between pages expand, different storylines, texts, images, and titles insert themselves. Layers of various matters juxtapose and form an eclectic glossary.⁴⁰

40 The choice of the glossary comes from my choreographic practice where each work always engages with a poetics, with a specific set of words and concepts inseparable from the process of making a performance.

2.3. Secret

‘Holding nothing together’ is a glossary of hypothetical loose pages. I have in mind choreographic glossaries that I composed in the past.⁴¹ I see the glossary as an account of what there is, a characterization aimed at enabling other thinking and other movements. Rather than encapsulate the mysterious forces of reading in performance – of what happens in performances when the audience reads – I see my role to be not in its explanation but in its characterization. I follow the example of anthropologist Michael Taussig who dissociates explanation from characterization in his prologue to *Defacement, Public Secrecy and the Labour of the Negative* (1999). Building upon Benjamin’s view that the revelation of a secret should do justice to it, Taussig associates explanation with an exposure that destroys the secret, while characterization is presented as the long way, ‘the labour of the negative,’ a revelation which does justice to the secret precisely by treating it as secret (1999:2). A glossary is a collection of ideas, of clues. It does not confront its elusive objects head on, but this collection invites readers to take the long way, trusting that elusive objects (like imaginative journeys and relations) can only become known unexpectedly.

The labour of the negative that Taussig elaborates grows from the philosophy of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. Taussig’s views on labour caught my attention when I was drawing connections between performance documentation and nothingness. I follow the philosophical thinking of Tristan Garcia (2014, see ‘3.3. Documentation: a book to do and to undo’) to claim that performance documentation is the nothing of the something of performance. Materialized or not performance documentation is like a print, a negative, an image-clue at the back of performance. Yet, performance documentation is a site of performance in its own right, again: the nothing, which is in fact something. Following this logic, an event of reading documentation in performance is then a gathering of a negative with a positive (documentation and

41 ‘Papier comestible’ (2018) is a book of loose edible pages combining narrative lines, scores, and images, in what I think of as a chaotic glossary describing hands and eyes, presences and disappearances. For the performance *Twists in the body of the big spectators* (2012a), reading cards carry a glossary

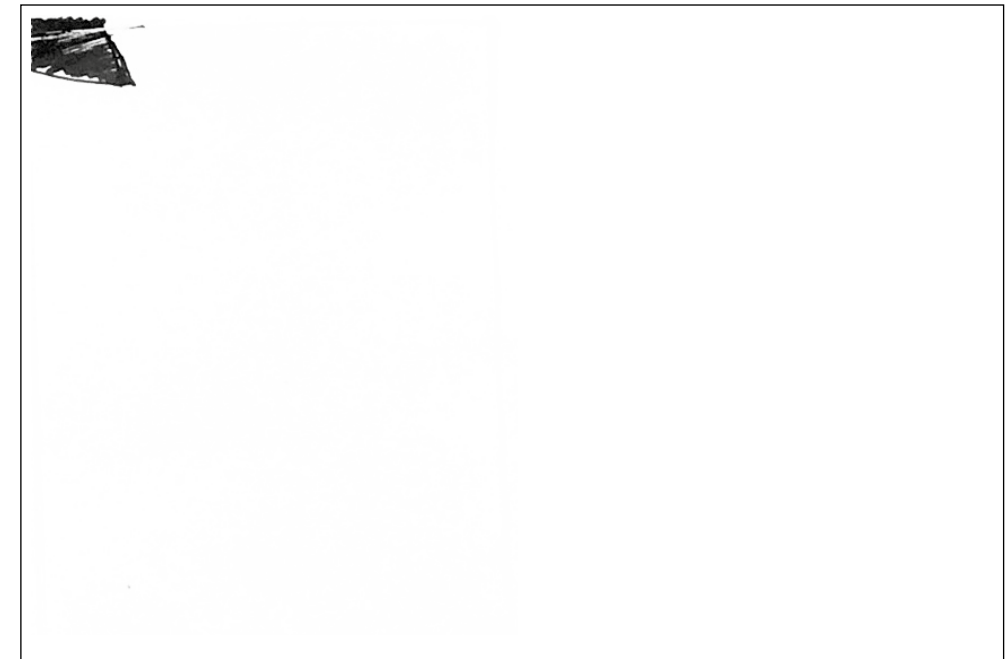
describing movements of the skins, the breathing, and the voices of a collective body. The book-performance *sync* (2012) contains a glossary of movements organized in themes of breathing, relations to others, recurrent forms, and combinations.

performance), where the positive may turn into the negative and vice versa the negative into the positive. Events of reading in performance are like a two-faced monster for the spectator reader to enter.

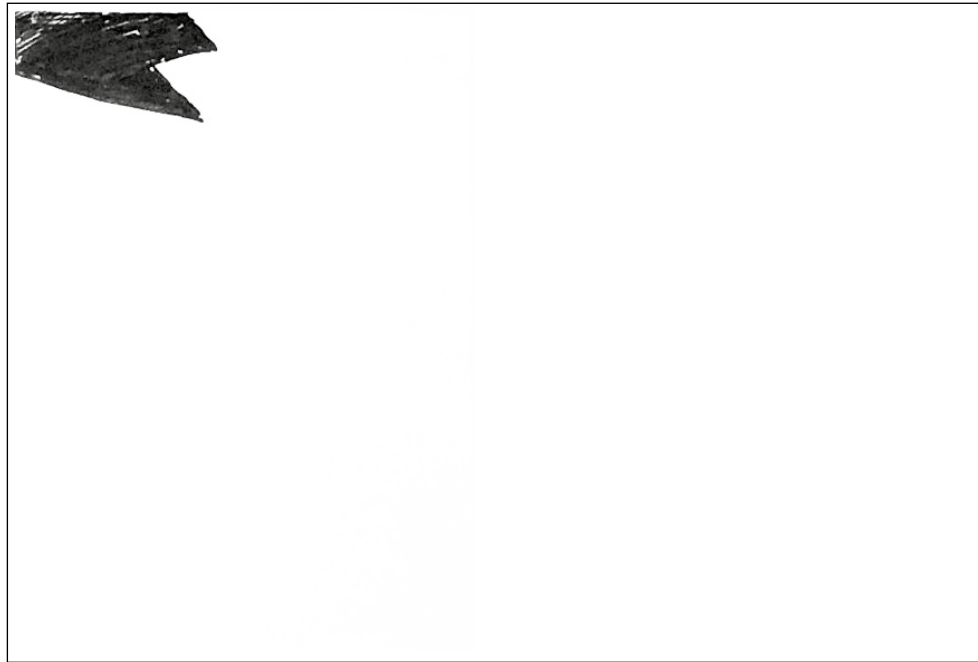
2.4. Faces

What does this two-faced monster of performance and documentation have to do with Taussig's anthropology? The concepts Taussig elaborates are helpful in thinking about what happens when encountering the two-faced monster I depict, when reading in performance. In Taussig's writing the labour of the negative is exercised for the defacement of public secrecy. For Taussig the public secret is 'that which is generally known, but cannot be articulated' (1999:5). Through mechanisms of concealment and revelation the public secret is, according to Taussig, the ground for the development of power, ideologies, and social formations. It is interesting to reflect for a moment about how public secrecy might be rehearsed in performance, but let us first consider the 'face' in defacement. Taussig develops the concept of the face as 'the evidence that makes evidence possible' (1999:224). This parallel between the face and evidence feeds here the analogy between performance, its documentation and the face.⁴² If we think of performance as one face, and of documentation in performance as another face of the same body, borrowing Taussig's concepts, both faces are at the same time a mask and a window providing access to different aesthetic experiences.

⁴² Performance documentation is often described and used for its quality of evidence. Auslander writes about New York editor Michael Kirby's view of documentation in the 1970's: 'the document, as surrogate, stands in for the original event for an audience to whom that event is no longer available' (2018:76-77).



Papier incombustible (Gallier 2020:np)



Papier incombustible (Gallier 2020:np)

Talking about the human face, Taussig describes ‘the face as fetish, the face as auratic splendour, the face limping one step behind its promise’ (1999:223). Taussig demonstrates that in its quality of fetish, the face looks at us who think we look at it. I propose to use Taussig’s view of the human face and apply it to the analogy between the face, performance, and its documentation. As a face, performance is not merely defined as that which we attend to or access, but performance accesses us, its agents. Performance documentation looks at us, its readers. Taussig’s line of thought allows us to think of how performance and its documentation implicate attenders, who are at the service of performance and of documentation in performance. In this light, the audience and readers are hosts for the performance and for performance documentation.

2.5. Hosts

Twisting and displacing Taussig’s case around defacement, I propose to consider and to admit that agents of performance – performers, audience, technicians, venues – are hosts. To put it bluntly, agents of performance are its servants. The presence of performance documentation in performance makes this act of hosting more palpable, for as Louppe states, documents remain unfinished in the absence of their readers (1994:33).⁴³ The presence of documents in performance materializes the inclusion of spectators (readers) in the nature of performance; viewers are always already included. In the events of reading in performance, their hands are invoked and touched by documentation. Yet, paradoxically enough, the audience being host does not make its live presence absolutely necessary for performance to be. Reading in performance opens up a space of possible absence for the audience. Reading, the audience exercises ubiquity, or might as well perform a vanishing trick. Philosopher Michel de Certeau writes in ‘Reading as Poaching:’

⁴³ In the essay ‘Traces of Dance,’ Louppe writes: ‘unfinished writings, humble springboards of a virtual space, modest advances beyond the possible, you exist but halfway, in the absence of the body that alone can read you’ (1994:33).

Reading has no place: Barthes reads Proust in Stendhal's text; the television viewer reads the passing away of his childhood in the news reports. One viewer says about the program she saw the previous evening: 'It was stupid and yet I sat there all the same.' What place captivated her, which was and yet was not that of the image seen? It is the same with the reader: his place is not here or there, one or the other, but neither the one nor the other, simultaneously inside and outside, dis-solving both by mixing them together, associating texts like funerary statues that he awakens and hosts, but never owns. (De Certeau 1984:174)

Reading in performance opens up a space of absence for the audience. Spectators who are also readers are reminded, through the presence of the document in performance, that they own their attention. In this thesis' fourth chapter, the performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018), the document in performance has the form of a book of loose and edible pages: 'Papier comestible.'⁴⁴ This book handed over to the audience is a performance in the performance, a performance happening on the stages of readers' imaginations. 'Papier comestible' decentralizes the audience's focus from the performers' actions. The edible book in the performance materializes my consideration for the practice of spectatorship. *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* is then the confluence of practices: practices of performing, practices of attending, practices of reading, practices of shaping illusions. These practices are interrelated; they affect each other and they benefit from being together. Yet, they do not depend from the others to be exercised (hence the metaphor of confluence). There is no pressure for interpretation, no demand for the communication of a message. The presence of documentation in performance asserts the autonomy of spectators and of performers. In reading, the audience as host might as well turn into ghosts.

Where do we go when we read? Poetess Lisa Robertson poses this question in *Nilling* (2012, see chapter five 'Time and time again'). From reading Hannah Arendt who asks 'where do we go when we think?' (Arendt in Robertson 2012:13), Robertson observes in the

44 The book that performs in the performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018) is named 'Papier comestible' in reference to its edibility. In 2020, the book was eaten and digested by the editions De Nieuwe Dansbibliotheek in Amsterdam. This digestion resulted in a new book, a new reading performance entitled *Papier incomestible* (Gallier 2020).

phrasing of the question a shift from the ontological 'what' to the spatial 'where:' where do we go? Building upon Arendt, Robertson pairs reading with thinking and assigns to reading the 'situatedness of an invisibility, an inconspicuousness, the necessary (and resistant) turning away of the thinking body from appearing' (Robertson 2012:13-14).

Reading resists being seen. This is not to say that it has no effects on public life ... Reading does change the world, but usually not in the way one might wish it to, and perhaps not visibly. Its acts are clandestine. (Robertson 2012:23)

2.6. Ghosts

Reading in performance invokes hands and eyes. It is a hand extended to the spectator to pull her into the practice of being in performance and at the same time it is a cut, a strange indifference from the performer towards spectators, an appreciation for their absence, a space made for ghosts. I qualify the intention of performers in relation to the audience of strange indifference after a process of understanding that has unfolded while practicing *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (2018).

This strange indifference is a partial indifference. In *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* performers do not gaze directly at the present audience, they rather gaze through the present audience; their intention is to perform for ghosts. These ghosts are ghosts of artists involved in this project and who are gone, ghosts of previous audience members, ghosts of magicians from another era, ghosts of movements that are not being performed. Performers of *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* perform for ghosts that are, and ghosts to be; because the audience who is present in the real time of the performance is a group of future ghosts – not to be looked at, but to look through, not to look for but to invoke. The understanding that unfolded while practicing *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* is that participatory structures in the performance

were tricking us. These participatory structures are: a table around which six spectators may sit, chairs and personal reading lights where spectators may read. These participatory devices can be misleading and they misled us (performing *Papier multiforme*, *Papier comestible*: Nina Boas, Camille Gerbeau, Katinka Marac, and myself). For it is hard for a performer enacting magic to not want the audience to join her at her table and to not push present spectators to sit down with her. For it is hard for a performer who hands out books and offers a reading space to not want the audience to read. For it is hard for a choreographer and her collaborating theatre venue to accept that there might be a very limited number of spectators and to accept the very limited visibility of the performance. It was difficult to pull back strategies of audience participation and to adopt tactics that invite while withdrawing, invite while giving space, tactics that I qualify as tactics of implication.⁴⁵ The participatory devices misled us because they made us feel dependant on actual present spectators while we understood our practice for this performance requires an independence between the acts of attending and of performing.

‘To dance is to see, to see together’ states choreographer Loïc Touzé (*my translation*).⁴⁶ Touzé’s practices of the gaze, informs my thinking of tactics of implication. There is one practice in particular that impressed me when I encountered Touzé’s work in 2015, and that imprinted my reflections about implication.⁴⁷ This practice is called ‘empreinter une danse,’ which translates as ‘imprint a dance’ and also, if heard phonetically, as ‘to borrow a dance’ (which is written ‘emprunter’). This multifaceted title suggests a lot: the practice reveals a dance which is there, yet does not belong to anyone. It is a trace living in the space, a dance one can host, a dance that might access us.

‘Empreinter une danse’ takes place in a dance studio in the time of a workshop and is practiced by the workshop’s participants. Four dancers exit the studio and stand quietly behind the closed door. The rest of the group inside the studio gathers on one side to face what has become the stage for the dance to come. This group forms the audience. A first dancer enters, closes the door. She makes a dance short enough she can remember it. She marks the space of invisible imprints

(*empreintes*) through her trajectories and gestures. At the end of her dance, she leaves the studio and closes the door. The second dancer enters. He takes a moment to sense the traces of the dance that just took place. He is on the lookout for the imprints left by the first dancer in order to borrow them (*emprunter*) in turn for his dance. He dances in front of the audience who, having seen the previous dance, is full of expectations. The audience searches for similarities and encounters with the dance that just left. Spectators perform the dance on the stage of their imaginations by filling in the gaps, movements and trajectories that the second dancer does not meet. At the end of his dance, the dancer leaves the studio and closes the door. The third dancer enters. She engages in the exercise of divination to perceive trajectories and flows of the dance by the first dancer, covered by trajectories and flows of the dance by the second dancer. She dances and uses the audience’s gaze as a partner. She knows the imprints of the dance rest in the living memory of the audience. She tries to guess at expectations. At the end of her dance she leaves the studio and closes the door. The fourth dancer enters. She takes a moment to sense the dances, which float in the space. She dances in front of the audience, leaves and closes the door. The four dancers enter together and dance what they remember of their dances. At that moment, the audience discovers there was only one dance since the beginning, a dance that always preceded the dancers, a dance made of relations between one dancer, another dancer, and the spectator’s inner projection (an inner dance?).

45 De Certeau distinguishes strategies and tactics in *The Practice of Everyday Life*: ‘A tactic insinuates itself into the other’s place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance’ (1984:xix).

46 See <https://www.pourunatlasdesfigures.net/ensemble/danser-cest-voir-loic-touze>

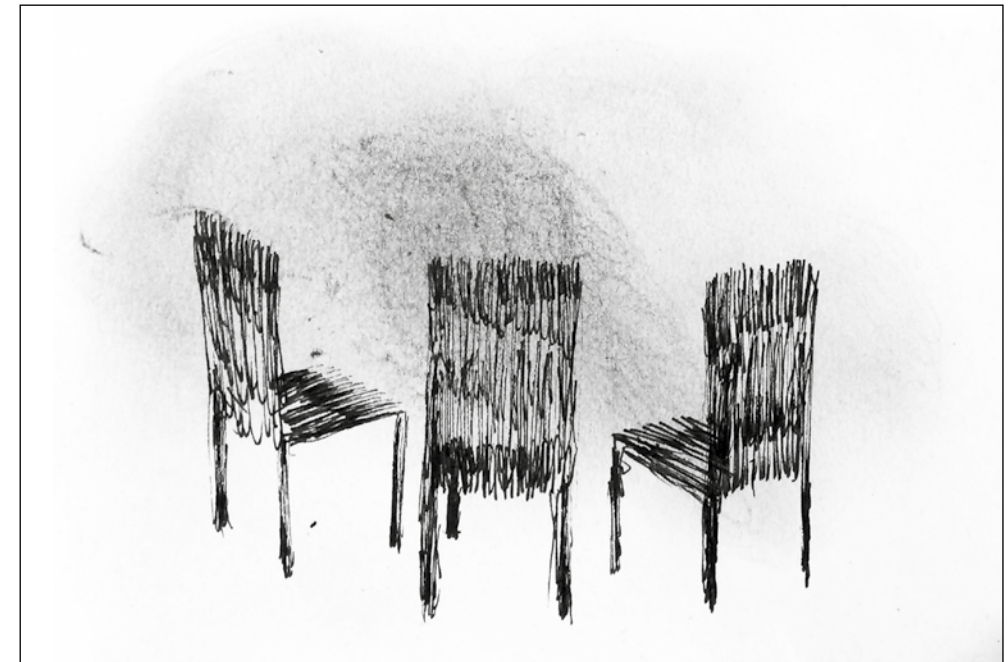
47 In June 2015, I participated to the five days workshop ‘Danser c’est voir, voir ensemble’ by Loïc Touzé within ‘Camping’ at the Centre National de la Danse in Paris.

2.7. Implicated

In Touzé's practice 'empreinter une danse' dancers and spectators are implicated with the dance by becoming its hosts. As hosts they engage by playing; they do not need to believe in the magic of the fictive divination, but they engage seriously with the speculative exercise. Dancers and spectators are also implicated with each other by becoming silent partners that might as well be absent. Touzé's research collaborator, artist and researcher Mathieu Bouvier writes about the practice 'empreinter une danse': 'one never dances alone, one always dances with absent partners' (2017:8 *my translation*).⁴⁸ Who else or what else might be the absent partners? There are not only the dancers and the spectators who are implicated; dance and traces are implicated with each other. The source of engagement between dance and traces is not just linear where the one simply precedes the other. Touzé's practice unravels more complexity (see '5.1. Documentation: time'). The engagement between dance and traces is an entanglement where the one makes the other possible and where the scale and perspective from where to look at dance or traces allows some interchangeability (dance can be traces, traces can be dance). 'There is no innocence of the first act, for the first act is only known as such in the light of a second act' (Bouvier 2017:9 *my translation*).⁴⁹

48 'On ne danse jamais seul, on danse toujours avec des partenaires absents' (Bouvier 2017:8).

49 Il n'y a pas d'innocence du premier acte, car le premier acte n'est connu comme tel qu'à la lumière d'un acte second' (Bouvier 2017:9).



Papier incommestible (Gallier 2020:np)

To dance is to see, to see together. [Where seeing is] less a vision than a divination ... to become the seer of the dance we make or we look at, is to let oneself be seized by collusions of perceptions and memory, when they split our presence to the world in a not-there (*hors-là*) or a *déjà-vu*. (Bouvier 2018:np)⁵⁰

Implicatedness (or implication) could also be called implicated gestures of participation (following the Bala in *The gestures of participatory art* 2018). It is a way of being in performance for the one who performs and for the one who looks, being host, being ghost, between absorption and distance. Implicated gestures of participation make a dance from the act of seeing: an invisible dance one dances with others. Reading in performance is in my view a tactic of implication because it prepares the ground for implicated gestures of participation, between absorption and distance.

2.8. Tactile

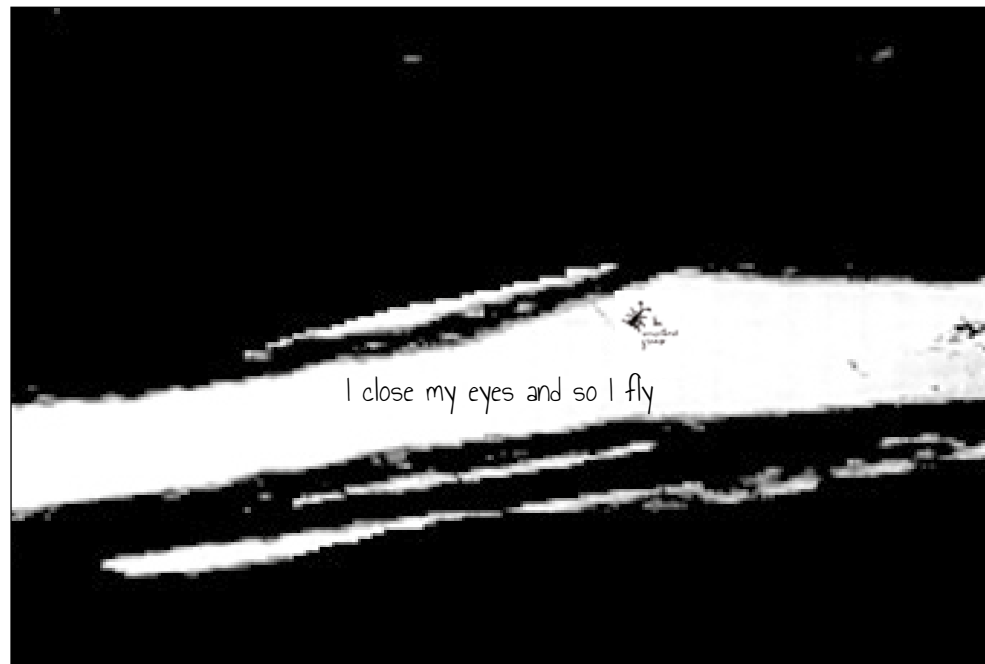
‘Do not touch with your hands. But you can touch with your eyes.’ My mum used to tell me these words when I was a child, as we would wander together at the street markets. How can I touch with my eyes? How can I sense volumes, textures, and weight by just looking? Can I taste with my eyes? I may have carried frustrations or curiosities through time to be developing what I now call the ‘tactile gaze’ in my dance practice. Or/and I may have searched for a practice that does make justice to my experience of reading dance scores: being absorbed in their depth and simultaneously being distant from them. The ‘tactile gaze’ joins absorption and distance as a practice of looking, reading and seeing. The practice takes place in a dance studio for participants who engage with it individually, yet in the same space and at the same time as others. Dancers walk and observe the mechanisms of their eyes, the

50 ‘Danser, c’est voir. Ce voir est moins une vision qu’une voyance ... Se faire voyant de la danse que l’on fait ou que l’on regarde, c’est se laisser saisir

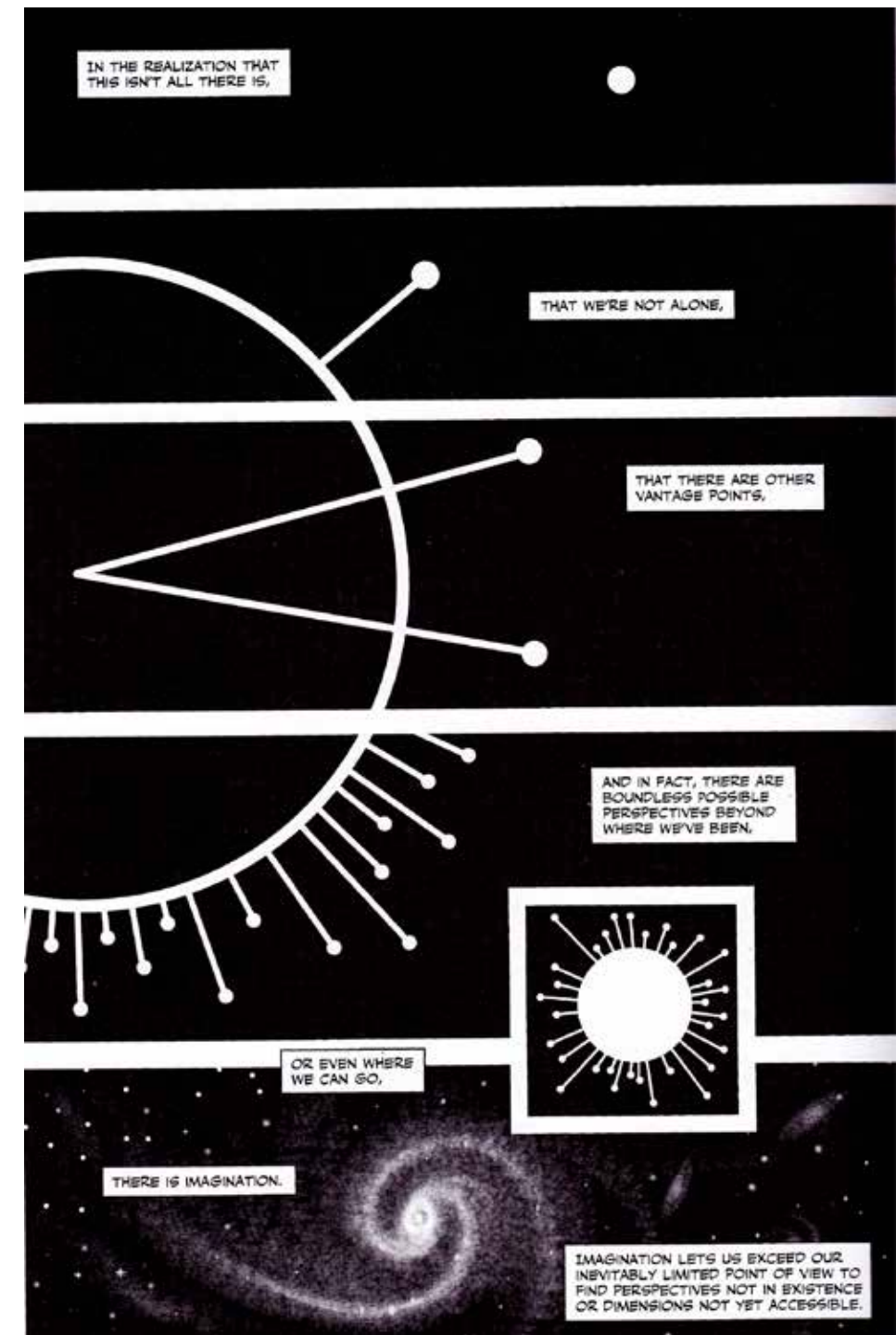
par les collusions de la perception et de la mémoire, lorsqu’elles dédoublent notre présence au monde en un *hors-là* ou un *déjà-vu*’ (Bouvier 2018:np).

eye’s anatomy and movements. They exaggerate some eye movements, opening the eyes much too wide, looking far to the left without mobilizing the neck. Participants experiment with their range of vision and use these visual movements to transport themselves into other realities. Tuning into a continuous short-range vision, dancers are like Alice from *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (Carroll 1865), feeling too large for the space in which they are: from close up their hand is a giant, from close up a hair becomes a tree. In long-range vision, dancers break the walls of the studio; they are in a vast mountainous landscape. In mid-range vision dancers encounter other dancers, making eye contact. The practice continues, dancers maintain their attention to their eyes and they add an observation of their feet while walking. They dive into a detailed exploration of their feet, their tactility, their exquisite complexity. Dancers activate shifts in pressure and in weight, they jump, they graze the floor, they push. Holding attention to eyes and feet simultaneously, dancers cultivate their tactile gaze. They are ready to ‘put on their tactile gaze’ by asking themselves, in movement, the question: what if my eyes would be my feet and my feet would be my eyes? Dancers improvise through this speculative practice, applying properties they observed in their feet to their eyes. Eyes walk away. Eyes jump. Eyes fly. Eye contact with others becomes a play of pressure, enjoying a furtive tactile gaze or pushing against one another’s eyes.

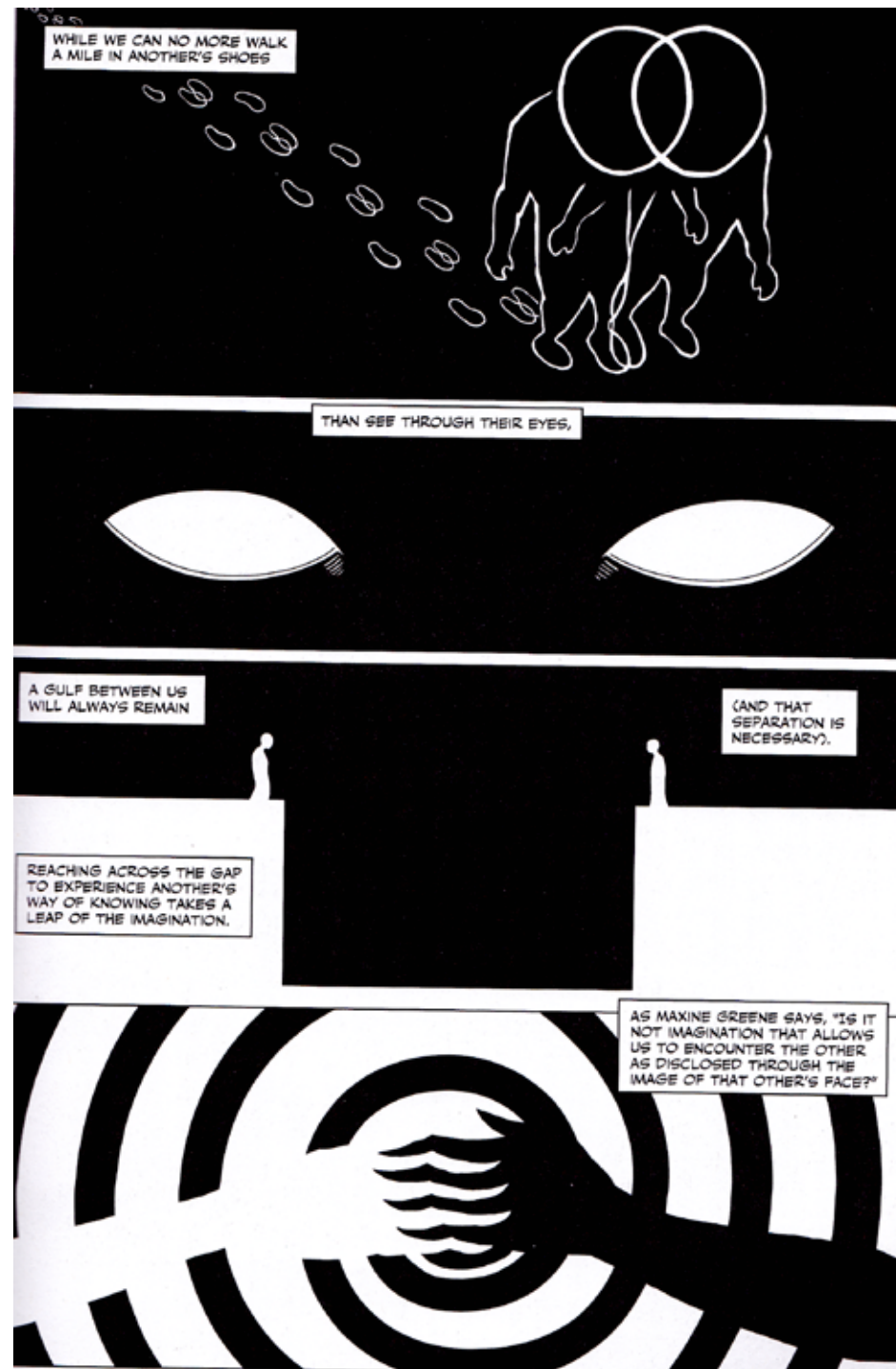
The practice I call the ‘tactile gaze’ cultivates a way of seeing that is a dance; it moves, and its constitutive body parts (eyes and feet) are fluid. Interchangeability stimulates the production of images. The ‘tactile gaze’ is like special glasses to be put on one’s nose in order to daydream. Putting on the ‘tactile gaze’ in the studio practice we read alone, ‘we read to us’ (someone reads to someone else), ‘we read in the company of’ (with a shared reading light, one participant reads next to another participants who also reads silently), ‘we read and dream’ and as we share what we see in our daydream, we realize images and imaginary journeys are intertwined, that we are implicated in the event of each other’s imaginations.



Papier incommestible (Gallier 2020:np)



Unflattening (Sousanis 2015:88)



Unflattening (Sousanis 2015:89)

'Written and drawn entirely as comics, *Unflattening* is an experiment in visual thinking' (Harvard University Press Catalogue). Nick Sousanis published his PhD thesis as comics. In so doing, rather than justifying his thesis, he exemplifies it.⁵¹ Drawing from *Flatland* science-fiction novel by Edwin. A. Abbott (1952), Sousanis identifies the imagination as the 'fifth dimension' (2015:85), key in resisting flat singular viewpoints. His thesis exalts multidimensional thinking with the idea that it is necessary to surpass the one-dimensional thinking that word and text might entail by expanding, practicing and training other dimensions of perception (images and movements for example). Reading Sousanis' thesis, one reads about the imagination while looking at images and projecting further dynamic images in one's mind either stimulated by text or by drawings. I see some similarities between the experience of reading comics and the one of reading in performance. Except from the collective aspect of reading in performance, reading comics consists like reading in performance of back and forth movements between reading and looking. The reader alternates various ways of attending to the page (in comics) and various ways of attending to the stage and the page (in events of reading in performance). Attention shifts between words and image, between the whole picture and details, between a movement and a thought. It is rather difficult to read comics out loud to someone and it is rather impossible to read a document in performance out loud because there is no clear line to follow, elements are interwoven, one cannot tell when to read what.

51 The form taken by Sousanis' discourse – comics – is the practice of discourse itself – the practice of making comics. Sousanis demonstrates the rigour and precision of his practice. His thesis acts as example for practice-as-research and advocates for the recognition of knowledge in practices.

2.9. Imagination

Like reading comics, reading in performance trains in the reader a sophisticated attention. *Unflattening* (Sousanis 2015) is a practical demonstration of how the weaving of different discursive tools – more than text – releases different vantage points setting up the ground for a view of plural imaginations, imagination in relation. This imagination emerges from otherness and generates more otherness. As Sousanis puts it, the imagination emerges in ‘the realization that this isn’t all there is, that we’re not alone’ (2015:88). The imagination grows from otherness in scale, in the plurality of vantage points, in the mysteries of closed doors or closed cupboards, in the horizon; otherness in darkness, behind closed eyelids, in clues announcing the presence of an absence.

The imagination is unleashed when our gaze loses itself (for instance the gaze loses itself in tea-leaves, in stains, in flames, in clouds, in the moving folds of an accordion pleated paper, in the dancing body and its elusive plasticity).⁵² Sousanis asserts that the imagination grows from otherness and then it generates more otherness: ‘we possess vast depths within depths, dimensions curled up within us accessible only through imagination’ (2015:96). Sousanis suggests that imagination is the human power to make the familiar strange, to access images and thoughts one would not have been able to imagine initially, without training, caring and making space for the imagination to be at work. The imagination is our ‘possibility to become something different’ (Sousanis 2015:97). In this respect, the description of the imagination by Sousanis connects to how philosopher Gaston Bachelard defines the imagination:

We always think of the imagination as the faculty that *forms* images. On the contrary, it *deforms* what we perceive; it is, above all, the faculty that frees us from immediate images and *changes* them. If there is no change, or unexpected fusion of images, there is no imagination; there is no *imaginative* act. If the image that is *present* does not make us think of one that is absent; if an image does not determine an abundance – and explosion – of unusual images, then there is no imagination. There is only perception, the memory of a perception, a familiar memory, a habitual way of viewing form and colour. The basic word in the lexicon of the imagination is not *image*, but *imaginary*. The value of an image is measured by the extent of its imaginary aura. Thanks to the *imaginary*, imagination is essentially *open* and *elusive*. (Bachelard 1988:1 *original emphasis*)

The imagination deforms and gives access to other dimensions.⁵³ Both Sousanis and Bachelard follow this line of thought. Yet for Bachelard, the distinction between imagination and perception is of importance, because imagination precisely makes perception more complex than it seems.⁵⁴ Poet Wallace Stevens also assigns the imagination the power to unravel complexity, moving from the familiar to the unfamiliar, for an inclusion of ‘the abnormal’ in daily life (Stevens 1951:145). In Sousanis’ frame, complexity unfurled by the imagination takes the name of the ‘strange’ (2015:96). In Touzé’s choreographic frame, the imagination is like an unfurling of images living in the viscera.⁵⁵

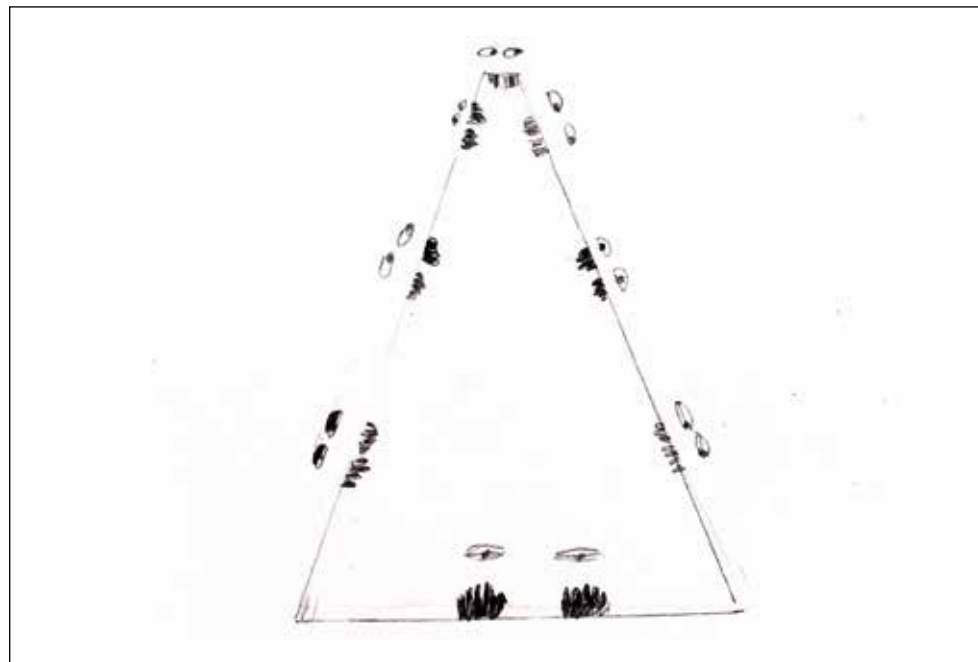
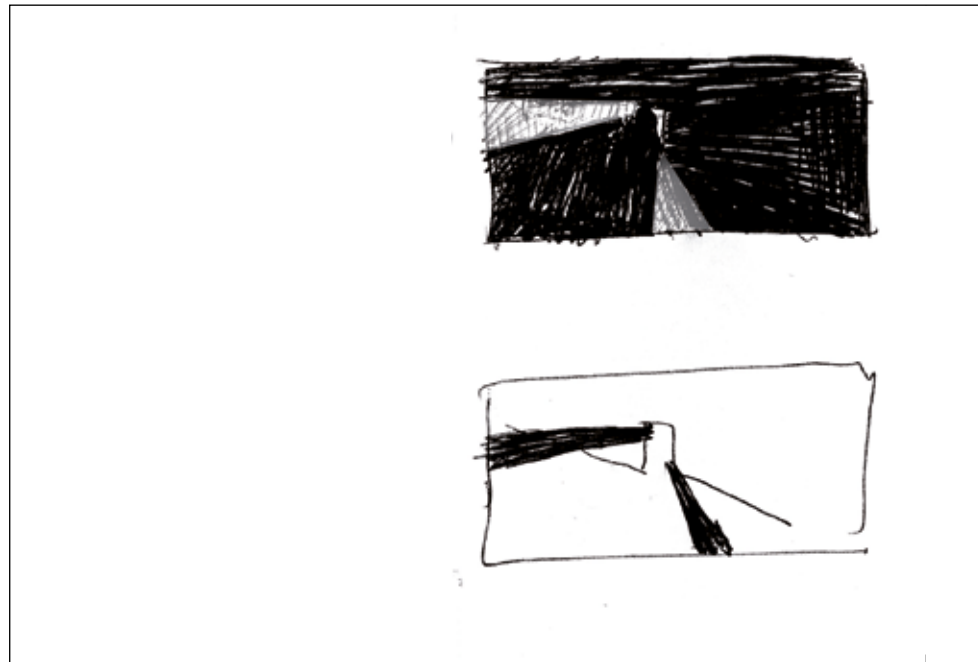
52 Dancer and researcher Alice Godfroy specifically writes about the emergence of hypnagogic images (that are the object of the imaginary in the theory of Sartre) on the online publication ‘pourunatlasdesfigures.net’ (Godfroy 2018). These

images are vivid projections of the mind in moments where we fall asleep, for instance and in moments of daydream. These folds of the imagination are particularly familiar with elusive forms and situations where the body is physically quiet or even passive.

53 Or perhaps, I would add, does it let other dimensions access us?

54 ‘Perceiving and imagining are as antithetical as presence and absence. To imagine is to absent oneself, to launch out toward a new life’ (Bachelard 1988:2).

55 Touzé shares his subjective vision of the imaginary in the podcast ‘Station Debout #9: Loïc Touzé et Marco Motta’ (DUUU Unités Radiophoniques 2019).



Papier incombustible (Gallier 2020:np)

2.10. Transplants

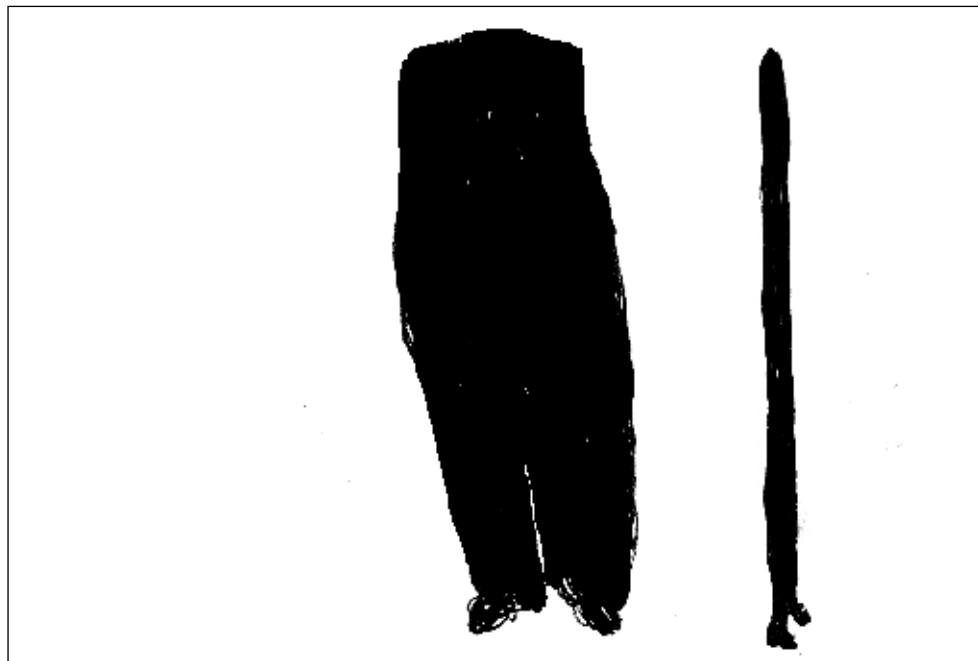
In Taussig's ethnologic frame, this power of the imagination to reveal complexity compares with a defacement of public secrecy (which I put in relation to what Stevens calls 'complex social forms' 1951:145). Taussig describes the imagination as playing a role within public secrecy ('that which is generally known, but cannot be articulated' 1999:5). Since the imagination is involved in the concealment of the public secret, it is also involved in its defacement. The imagination that Taussig describes is an imagination out of oneself, relational, one's imagination of other people's imagination, for instance: chains of pretending and chains of believing (the adult imagines the child's imaginative life around the secret of Santa Claus; Taussig 1999:269). The *public* in public secret reminds us of the fact that other people are implicated in concealing the secret and in revealing it. The imagination out of oneself described by Taussig includes the imagination of the other; it is like a transplant of viscera to unfurl.⁵⁶

Let me make a brief aside before I unpack my idea of imbricated imaginations in the context of reading in performance. Bachelard promotes the imagination for its movement. 'Imagination is primarily a kind of spiritual mobility of the greatest, liveliest, and most exhilarating kind' (Bachelard 1988:2). Imagination induces a movement that Bachelard compares to a 'dynamic reverie' (1988:3), an imaginative journey where images we encounter are vivid like in a fascinating dream: 'movement of the imagination – we will really feel it within ourselves, most often as a release – as ease in imagining related images or desire to pursue a fascinating dream' (Bachelard 1988:4). For this movement to occur, Bachelard recommends switching off sight 'because sight follows movement so effortlessly, it cannot help us to make that movement part of our inner lives' (1988:8). The document in performance does something along the lines of such withdrawal of sight. In fact the document in performance invites a transformation of sight so that it can help us touch movement, making it part of our inner life.

⁵⁶ I dare to mix and interweave Taussig and Touzé's poetics of the imagination.

On thick black paper
 I crumple with my feet on inhale
 I uncrumple on exhale
 I fold my body down on inhale
 I unfold my body up on exhale
 My body is a house on an island that breathes
 I walk down the stairs on inhale
 I climb through the house on exhale
 The island breathes incessantly
 Other images access me

Score Islands' inhabitants



Papier incombustible (Gallier 2020:np)

The presence of documentation in performance disrupts the effortless activity of sight that follows movement in performance and it connects sight to touch. When reading in performance the activity of the hands – at times physically holding the document, turning pages, crumpling – adds to the activity of sight. In reading in performance, sight is cultivated as a complex activity, like a ‘tactile gaze.’ Holding a document in performance, the spectator sets out for an imaginative journey with vivid images, like in a daydream (a levitation?).⁵⁷

In the studio practice of the ‘tactile gaze,’ I observed that the imaginative journeys of participants were interrelated. My intuition is that imaginative journeys of readers in performance are interrelated and inform each other. I intuit that reading spectators set out for an imaginative journey that is infused with and that infuses the imaginations of others, performers, documents, and other spectator readers. Engaged in modulations of attention between absorption and distance the spectators-readers are both observing and observed, accessing and accessed, they become implicated in the events of other spectators’ imaginations. What is at stake from this intuition is that reading in performance is an event in which one rehearses seeing as a tactile act, seeing as a dance, and imagining in relation.⁵⁸ Events of reading in performance are participatory sites where performers and documents perform without imposing, but rather by withdrawing. Events of reading in performance are sites where the audience hosts the dance(s) in delicate invisible ways.

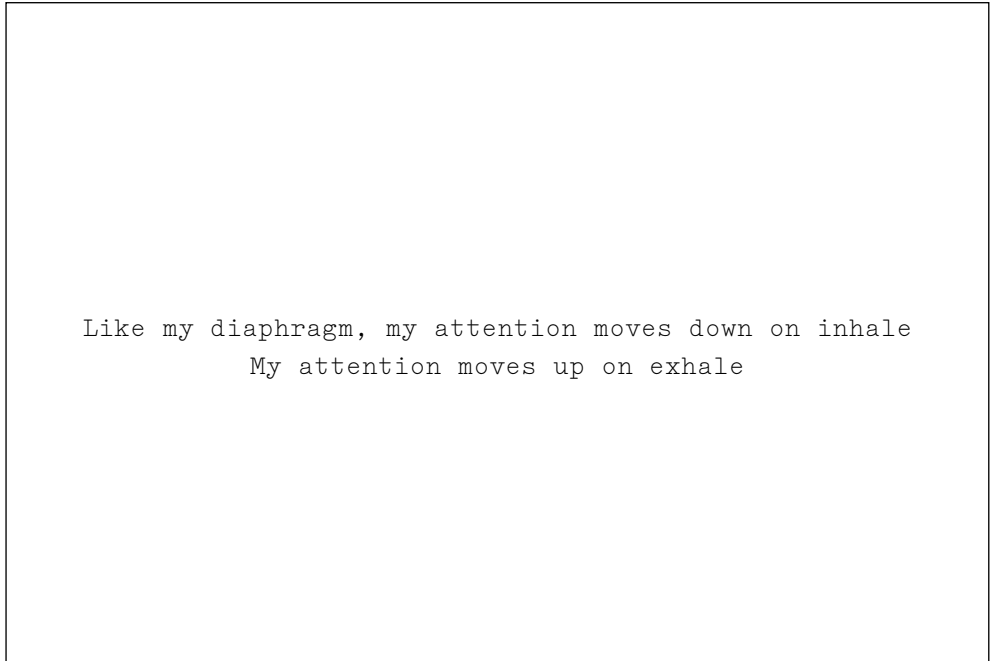
2.11. Divinations

Reading in performance is a tactic of implication, between absorption and distance, and in interrelation with the imagination of others. Performance is approached as a thinking device, a daydream device, a place to rehearse and therefore to challenge the public secrets of social

⁵⁷ I suggest the imaginative journey of the reading spectator might activate some levitation following the poetics of Bachelard who writes: ‘as the dynamic imagination helps us develop a feeling for aerial phenomena, we will feel that there is a mobility of images in proportion to the awareness within ourselves of a release, a gaiety, a lightness. Accessional life will then be an inner reality’ (1988:10).

⁵⁸ I do not have much argument to prove this intuited statement and I might need to undertake another long research journey to develop these ideas further. I would for example study Pfaller’s theory of illusions without owners (see Pfaller 2014) where distance (the fact of seeing through an illusion) is paired with absorption (the commitment to a practice) and pleasure (resulting from play).

forms in performance. For like Taussig asserts, there is always on the other side of secrecy a call for transgression in consciousness of the rules (1999:53). Events of reading in performance invite the audience and withdraw; valuing what Bala calls the ‘unruly modes of participation’ (Bala 2018:136). A reading audience hosts the performance and is its servant while at the same time possibly spending its secrets and enjoying the guilt this spending might entail. Events of reading in performance do not simply expose the artists’ questions to the audience (the question motivating the work), but spectators engage by bringing their own questions and using performance as a divination device,⁵⁹ helping us through a collective act to move towards our imbricated futures.

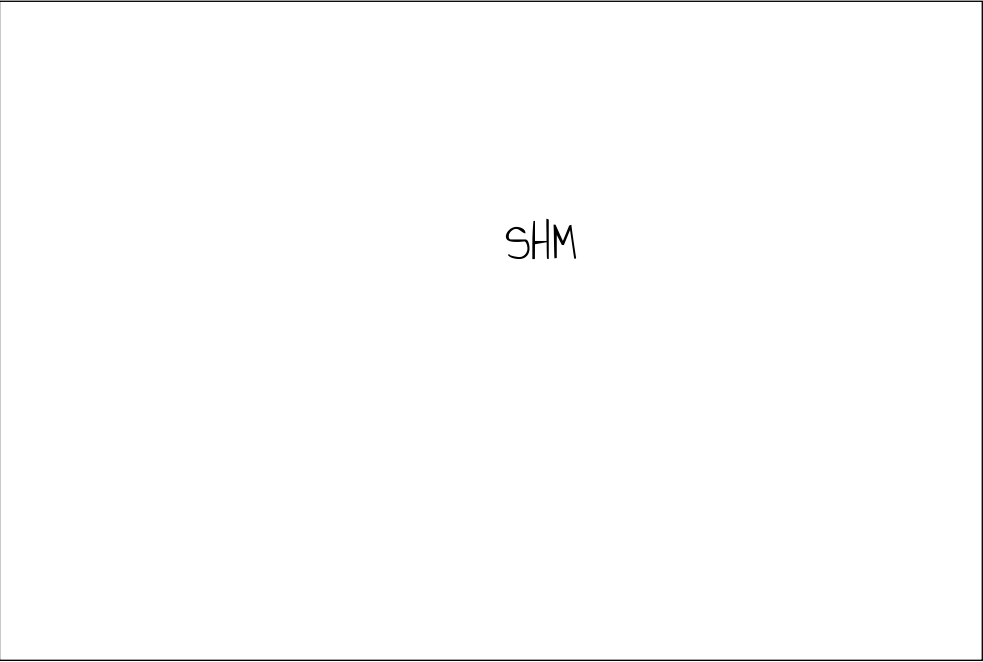


Like my diaphragm, my attention moves down on inhale
My attention moves up on exhale

Score *Diaphragmatic*⁶⁰

59 This thought is inspired by two examples of performance communicated as divination device. Say by choreographer Julien Bruneau (2016): the spectator prepares questions prior to the performance and the dance is treated like an oracle. *Extended Hermeneutics* by dancer Jennifer Lacey (2019): in this one-to-one piece, ‘the most important element is that the participant wants to make their life legible. It contrasts with most dances, where the audience are

deciphering the performers’ moves’ (Lacey in Wiegand 2019). Both examples are one-to-one pieces and my interest opens up then to performance as divination device involving the solitary implicated with the collective.
60 To observe the movements of the diaphragm while breathing, see this video of an MRI of the thorax while breathing: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/dd/Real-time_MRI_-_Thorax.ogv



SHM

Papier incombustible (Gallier 2020:np)

Chapter 3. WHERE IMAGES SURFACE

3.1. Audience: under the roof

The space will have been black and empty, neither big nor small, quite similar to any other space of its kind. The lights will have been brighter so that you can see better.

Mette Edvardsen, *Every now and then*, 2009

A KIND OF SPACE

There is a kind of space, a family of spaces that accommodates reading in performance (among other things). There are similarities between these spaces where the audience, at times, happens to read in the moment of performance. Theatre is often the name given to this kind of space, but sometimes these spaces look like theatre while they are

not theatre. Some other times these spaces neither look like theatre nor are they theatre, but they build upon and invoke an imaginary theatre. When I sit next to the book *Answered Prayers* for the performance *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* (THFAITAS Edvardsen 2010) I am in a library, not a theatre. Yet the kind of activity that is asked of me invokes some sort of imaginary theatre. From the moment the performer Mari Matre Larsen tells me 'I am *Answered Prayers* by Truman Capote,' it feels as if we sit under the invisible roof of some tiny theatre for two people. In this 'kind of space,' she recites *Answered Prayers* and I listen; she reads the memorized book while speaking, and I read while listening. Reading in performance occurs in imagined or real theatre spaces. In this third chapter, I examine the immanent spectatorship that these spaces induce, to then observe what reading adds or transforms.

The Roof is an artwork and practice by Alice Pons and Olivia Reschovsky (MOHA 2016). It developed under the physical roof of the Veem House for Performance in Amsterdam, a theatre where the artists held successive public events between November and December 2016.⁶¹ For these events Pons and Reschovsky practiced what they call their performative hosting (Appendix 2017). They provided the audience with drinks, food, performative acts by themselves and their guests, poetry, the occasion to dance a slow or a folkloric dance. Together with the audience, arranging people in small groups, they researched roof related questions. 'what is your roof?' was the question on November 18, and 'What functions should our roof have?' was the question on November 25. I participated in these two evenings because I got seduced by photos and drawings in circulation about *The Roof* and because I was intrigued by one phrase in the project's description: '*The Roof* is a public and a collective art work addressing and using the different expertise there is in the construction of its structure and identity.'⁶² I now realise this interest coincides with my writing for this chapter about the relationship and co-determination between the roof of theatre and people and things under it.

The Roof begins with a welcoming speech given by Pons and Reschovsky. This protocol speech, as they call it themselves in our later

61 For the successive dates of *The Roof* (2016) see <https://veem.house/EN/the-roof>.

62 Ibid.

conversation addresses the situation we are in (Pons and Reschovsky Appendix 2017). The speech acknowledges 'the potential mess or awkwardness of the situation' (Pons and Reschovsky Appendix 2017), and tries to soften the expectations spectators may have that the artists will explain what is going on or that they will provide answers. Instead, the 'protocol speech' invites the audience 'to work together' (Pons and Reschovsky Appendix 2017):

We say that we care for each other but we don't have to worry about each other, that we all are responsible for ourselves ... It feels we are dreaming about a public that would take care of itself ... I would call this a responsibility for your own journey. (Pons and Reschovsky Appendix 2017)

For Pons and Reschovsky *The Roof* is 'a poetic window' (Appendix 2017), a place to practice the valuable act of 'being together for the sake of being together' (Appendix 2017):

The Roof is this moving 'institute' that can be put up where there is the need for this invisible symbol. The symbol to come together. This does not have to (and should not) be about a consensual place. (Pons and Reschovsky Appendix 2017)

The Roof starts from the artists' interest in gathering people and welcoming their differences. In the practice, I experienced these gatherings as a little awkward at times and certainly confusing (in a positive sense). For example, there was some confusion at first about what the terms 'your roof,' 'functions,' and 'our roof' meant. The absence of frame and context for the words in the artists' questions generated grey areas. As a participant, these evenings were an opportunity to embrace the choreographic problems Pons and Reschovsky proposed, while I was at the same time reflecting on my own question about the kind of space a theatre is for reading in performance. I could think along with the artists in an environment rich with sensorial and poetic insights. I imagined myself and other spectators as co-researchers under *The*

Roof where the act of research consisted of, first of all, the practices of participation and of spectatorship. From this observation, far from drawing any generalisation about Pons and Reschovsky's work, nor about the ontology of theatre, but as an orientation for this research, I frame the kind of space in which reading in performance happens as a space where people and things come together. In this kind of space, some practice participation and spectatorship, others practice performing.

FOR A RESPONSIBLE AUDIENCE IN A TIME OF PROGRAMMED SPECTATORSHIP

I make a link between the activity of spectators and participants as co-researchers in *The Roof* by Pons and Reschovsky (2016) and the philosophy of spectatorship as proposed by Rancière in *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009):

The collective power shared by spectator does not stem from the fact that they are members of a collective body or from some specific form of interactivity. It is the power each of them has to translate what she perceives in her own way, to link it to the unique intellectual adventure that makes her similar to all the rest in as much as this adventure is not like any other. This shared power of the equality of intelligence links individuals, makes them exchange their intellectual adventures, in so far as it keeps them separate from one another, equally capable of using the power everyone has to plot her own path. What our performances - be they teaching or playing, speaking, writing, making art or looking at it - verify is not our participation in a power embodied in the community. It is the capacity of anonymous people, the capacity that makes everyone equal to everyone else. This capacity is exercised through irreducible distances; it is exercised by an unpredictable interplay of associations and dissociations. (Rancière 2009:16-17)

Rancière asserts that all involved in performance are equally intelligent. The audience and performing artists alike are equally capable of forming their experience in front of the performance, this 'third thing' (Rancière 2009:15). The audience and artists' relation to the performance is different, but Rancière challenges the idea that the performance belongs to someone. In fact, it might be that this 'third thing,' that is the performance, belongs to all involved, including those who are not present. In Rancière's view there is no such thing as a passive spectator (or, I would add, a non participant). This is echoed by Edvardsen: 'when I am sitting in the dark in the theatre I am as much a participant as when I have to go and engage' (Appendix 2017) and Reschovsky: 'what is passive in my eyes might be active for the person in front of me' (Appendix 2017).

Pristaš discusses 'programmed spectatorship' (2018:19), which he presents as one unfortunate consequence of Rancière's theory of *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009). Pristaš blames the significant turn to the spectator in performance studies for a reduction of attention and care given to the production of art and to artists:

The many decades of concern for the spectator, who went through every stage, from observer to participant and then became an 'emancipated spectator' – has resulted in the subjectivation of spectatorship. Whereas the producer spoke of 'his artists,' the curator talks of 'her audience.' The audience is viewed as a model of the public, but today's emphasis on programmed spectatorship is turning into a model of the ideal spectator. (Pristaš 2018:18-19)

Pristaš observes that spectatorship became the subject and shadowed the attention for the artists and the artwork. This analysis is in my view an oversight of Rancière's proposal to see the performance as 'the third thing that is owned by no one, whose meaning is owned by no one' (2009:15). The care for what happens in theatrical spaces, within this research *Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle*, is not an additional focus on audience reception. It is an interest for what is being produced by all agents of the performance, living and non-living,

in the events of reading in performance. The kind of theatrical space for reading in performance includes the viewers while caring less about spectators who are here anyway even in their absence.⁶³ In a time where the curators' audience forms an ideal spectator, I see Pons and Reschovsky as resistant. They are – borrowing Pristaš' words – in a quest for the 'actual spectator' who suffocates from 'programmed spectatorship.'⁶⁴ They dream of the opposite of consensus.⁶⁵ They dream of a responsible audience where individuals offer their time, and possibly waste their time while being there, spectators, under the roof, with their own questions and with Pons and Reschovsky's artistic problems. Continuing my observation of *The Roof* (MOHA 2016) next to Pristaš' thinking, I find the following quote appropriate:

Artistic, creative excess, the production of relations that have not yet explained themselves, still generates divisions and demolishes consensus. This is especially so if it comes out of collective processes that also entail a re-functionalization of the very modes of production and apparatuses of representation. (Pristaš 2018:29-30)

There are many ways to engage with *The Roof*; some participants will feel invited while other participants will feel overly directed (in other words they will feel they have to fit with an idea of an ideal spectator). Despite this fragility of Pons and Reschovsky's spectatorial dispositif, the key for their practice to exit the trap of programmed spectatorship resides in the collective processes they perpetuate and continuously engage with. Pons and Reschovsky develop their performance works alongside regular practices where they reach out to local communities and where friendships develop through the practice of movement and performance. These processes not only value differences but also allow for different participants of the work to be transformed by their repetitive encounters with Pons and Reschovsky's performance practice⁶⁶ (by participants I refer here to the artists and their anonymous collaborators).⁶⁷

63 Theatre is 'a poetic set or conjuncture of viewers and actors in performance' (Pristaš 2018:37). Spectators are present even through their absence because their presence is projected within the practice of the performance work (at rehearsals, working sessions).

64 One can critically note that Pons and Reschovsky might only be able to respond to the problem of programmed spectatorship by fitting within programmed spectatorship themselves and by being presented in institutional frames by curators who identify 'their' audience as 'responsible.'

65 Rancière writes: 'what "dissensus" means is an organization of the sensible where there is neither a reality concealed behind appearances nor a single regime of presentation and interpretations of the given imposing its obviousness on all' (2009:48).

66 Transformation is part of Pons and Reschovsky's language, one of their regular practices is called *The Magic Transformers*, see <http://www.mohaproject.com/the-magic-transformers/>

67 Some participants in the artists' regular practices are collaborators in Pons and Reschovsky's work. They join performances and at times carry performative acts. See <http://www.mohaproject.com/move-dance-act/>

ATTENDER, ANONYMOUS, POET, IMPERSONAL, IMPLICATED

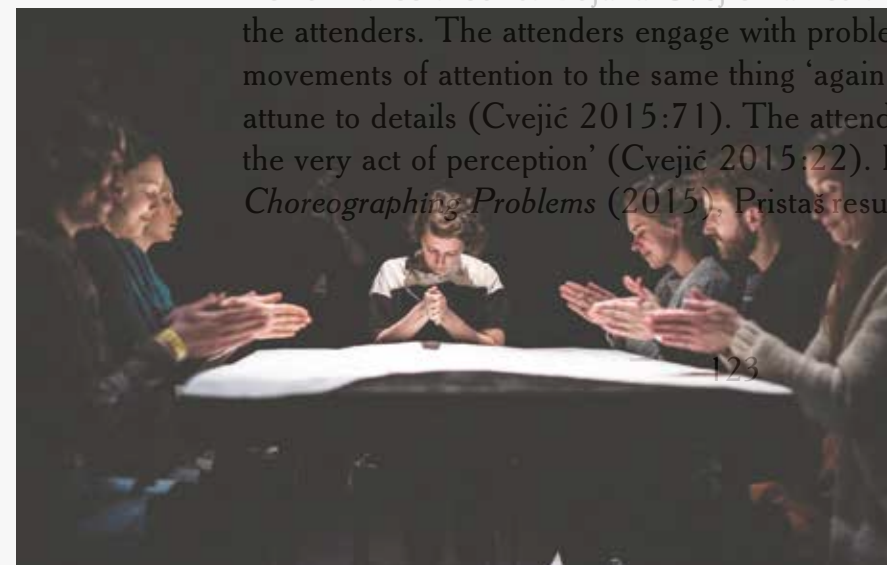
Bishop correlates visions about participation with the historical contextual ground from which they grow:

The identity of participants has been reimagined at each historical moment: from a crowd (1910s), to the masses (1920s), to the people (late 1960s/1970s), to the excluded (1980s), to community (1990s), to today's volunteers. (Bishop 2012:277)

In view of the influence of Rancière's theory on artists and theorists, it is tempting to qualify participants of the 2010s as *emancipated*; or perhaps would the *ideal* spectator be more appropriate? This research is not the place to determine the best qualification for spectators, audience and participants of the 2010s. My interest is rather in observing the adjectives used in the context of performing arts and expanded choreography, and to scrutinize what is being produced under these roofs. Setting aside the differences between spectators and participants (discussed in '1.1. Audience: in the failure of participation') here are a few adjectives and nouns designating audiences: ideal, programmed, enmeshed, and implicated (Pristaš 2018), responsible (Pons and Reschovsky 2016), implicated attender (Cvejič 2015), emancipated and anonymous (Rancière 2009), blind (Baervoets 2003), necessary accomplices (Dominguez 2012), impersonal and poet (Bruneau 2018).

Spectators of performances of expanded choreography immerse themselves with problems within the choreographer's state of questioning.⁶⁸ Performance theorist Bojana Cvejič names these spectators:

the attenders. The attenders engage with problems through iterative movements of attention to the same thing 'again and again' and they attune to details (Cvejič 2015:71). The attenders are responsible 'for the very act of perception' (Cvejič 2015:22). From reading Cvejič's *Choreographing Problems* (2015), Pristaš resumes that:



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An attender is a spectator who is concerned with displacing the habitual, and this attention results from performances that: 1) include, in a non-dialogical way, the presence and movement of those to whom the performance is presented; 2) establish different temporal operations; 3) establish an asymmetry in perception, that is, disable automatic perception in the spectators and divert their attention from the performers' acts to their own perception. The attender is not a performer, but is part of the set that constitutes the encounter. But the attender is not a mere participant either, she is not interpellated into the action, her viewing becomes doing. Above all, she is expected to be involved in a form of participatory thinking. (Pristaš 2018:207)

I think that this definition of attender combines Pons and Reschovsky's understanding of the responsible spectator with Rancière's notion of anonymity. Rancière suggests that the power of being together at performances is the practice of our anonymity as spectators who are emancipated from being the 'privileged medium' (Rancière 2009:21). Anonymity is the acknowledgment of opacity between the agents of performance who each fabricate an experience of the performance in their own world. Yet this opacity does not imply isolation, as choreographer Julien Bruneau demonstrates in the article 'The labour of sense-making' (2018) and through his performance *Say* (2016). *Say* is the experiment of an oracular apparatus. In this one-on-one performance, the spectator prepares three concerns and the performer dances to these concerns without ever knowing them. Bruneau writes that 'the spectator is but a kind of poet taking charge of the surprising correspondence and reformulation of his concerns when they meet the interpretation of the oracle' (2018:np). He continues by critically reminding his reader of an often forgotten aspect of Rancière's theory:

Working from the premise that spectators are always already emancipated means that performers too are emancipated. Emancipated from the heavy, deadly, flattening good intention to communicate, give or help. We could then envision a contract

between spectator and performer where each one recognizes and values the irreducible opacity of the other. A contract where we do not look for transparency, understanding, or even communication. (Bruneau 2018:np)

Further down his article, Bruneau suggests that the opacity of the other does not imply isolation. Beyond opacity, the oracular device exceeds the subject and provokes leakages. Something 'impersonal' happens (Bruneau 2018:np).

Oracular processes invite to a certain way of contemplating the issues that matter to us. A way that is, paradoxically enough, *impersonal* ... By impersonal, we mean the vibrant and rich quality of that which is deployed when we suspend our drive to identify with what affects us, to own the thoughts and feelings that occur in us. By impersonal we characterize that which rises from the acknowledgement that much of what happens in me and through me doesn't belong to me (Bruneau 2018:np).

The oracle functions from a ground where entities aren't self-enclosed but enmeshed,⁶⁹ imbricated, and implicated.⁷⁰ Under the roof, questions transpire. Air circulates. The solitude of the spectator, this anonymity and opacity isn't a detachment from the collective sense of performance. Following Bala's critical theorization of participation through 'the gesture of vicarious participation,' performances in the space of theatre can be the occasion for, in Bala's words, 'collective processes of imagining and transforming selfhood' (2018:22).

The solidarity in the gesture of vicarious participation lies not so much in recognizing and finding the so-called 'other' or in respecting and celebrating differences, but rather in being prepared and willing to dispossess oneself of the fixity of one's ideas of the self. (Bala 2018:22)

69 Pristaš writes: 'the spectator no longer has the privileged position of an objective viewer because he's already enmeshed' (2018:80).

70 Cvejić writes: 'the involvement of an implicated attender assumes the quality of complicity, bearing some, but not all, responsibility for the very act of

perception ... The somewhat criminal connotation of the notion of being implicated – as in being involved in a crime – points to the problem that the performances "give" to their attender(s). Suspending her habitual activities ... renders the position of the attender qua spectator problematic' (2015:222).

I read poetess Lisa Robertson's book *Nilling* (2012) and a relation between reading and participation jumps at me. Robertson recognizes will as 'one of reading's motion' and yet she experiences most reading pleasures when she suspends the will, 'in the release of purposiveness and instrumental cognition' (Robertson 2012:26). Reading in performance can become a gesture of participation – invoking Bala's words again – to transform selfhood.

3.2. Reading: looking and touching⁷¹

DETOURS

Peeters writes of his experience as spectator of *every now and then* by Edvardsen in 2009:

Am I a reader or a spectator or both? Meeting two protagonists standing, looking, walking, I follow them on a walk, not so much *into* but *through* the book, from left to right, from cover to cover. The book contains photographs only, sometimes an empty or colored page, no written words, save for the title on the spine, *every now and then*. Even when the protagonists bring a microphone, the book remains curiously silent. Turning the pages, I remember the noise of a large group of spectators with this book in their laps, flipping through the pages, duly following the performance's unfolding, setting about their own mental voyages upon a *deviation* of photographed and enacted scenes, quickly paging ahead, looking for coincidence, slowing down again when taken by surprise or when the performers on stage claimed attention. (Peeters 2019:28-29 *my emphasis*)

71 This second section of the chapter is named after an installation of photographer and filmmaker Babette Mangolte. *Looking and Touching* (2007) is a photo installation where photographs of performances from the Judson Dance Theatre are placed on a table for viewers to sort and arrange. In the space of the gallery, the spectator organizes her own gaze, manipulates

images, and moves her body in space, producing gestures in coordination with the gaze. I visited the exhibition *Spaces to See* (2019) a retrospective of Mangolte's work at the Musée d'Art contemporain de la Haute-Vienne where the installation *Collision* (2008) proposed a similar experience of organization of the gaze involving the hands.

This testimony from a reader and a spectator shows one example of *deviation* of attention induced by the act of reading in performance. In this instance, reading in the real time of performance decentralizes attention from the onstage performers. The presence of the book reconfigures attention's distribution; it creates an asymmetry in perception. In the constellation of things under the roof of theatre – next to the performer, the spectator, and the performance – the book in *every now and then* (Edvardsen 2009) is a fourth thing. This fourth thing releases new directions for attention. At times, it may produce confusion because when a book is in the spectators' hands, they are not told where to look and when to turn the pages. This fourth thing they hold onto emphasizes their responsibility for perception and their ability for distraction.

In its encounter with a beholder, the fourth thing is a performance inside the performance. This imbrication is a little fractal phenomenon, a mode of repetition with alteration, an accumulation of perspectives. In the example of *every now and then* (Edvardsen 2009) spectators hold a book of photographs, images they can organize for themselves, like they organize in a simultaneous time their perception of the movements on stage. A performative documentation of *every now and then* (Edvardsen 2009) 'brings the performance to me, to be experienced in my temporal and spatial context' (Auslander 2018:46). In the real time of the 'live' performance, this context is the time and space of the theatre. In performance, documentation makes performance, while I am being in performance already. One effect of reading in performance is a *mise-en-abîme*, a layering of attention. The fourth thing – a document to hold onto and to read in performance – is a space in the space, a performance in the performance; it is also a way out for the beholder, it foregrounds the possibility of withdrawal, the opportunity 'to override the expected, official, and legitimate order of attentions, to open one's eyes to programmed attentional blind spots' (Damian 2020:np).⁷²

72 The opportunity to withdraw already exists in any performance (see Ellis 2015). My suggestion is that reading in performance foregrounds and encourages this opportunity.

DISPLACEMENTS

In the moment of performance, reading displaces the spectator's point of view from the performers. It is an activity characterized by its discretion like a mental activity.⁷³ Mental activities 'never appear, though they manifest themselves to the thinking ego which is aware of being active, yet lacks the urge to appear as such' (Robertson 2012:22). Reading in performance is one form of participatory thinking. Reading in performance is – borrowing (and displacing) Pristaš words – 'a displacement of the viewer in the viewing of viewing, the viewing of a clash between two views – the intelligence of the performer and that of the apparatus' (2018:249).⁷⁴ Considering the fourth thing – which takes the form of a book in *every now and then* (Edvardsen 2009) – as an apparatus determined by and determining the reader's view, the displacement of the spectators as readers manifests their inclusion in the ontology of theatre. Theatre always includes its viewer (Pristaš 2018:37). *Free* documentation – the term I propose to qualify documents that are read in the real time of performance (see '1.3. Documentation: non-representational') – always already includes the beholders, their reading, their looking and touching. In his concept of performative documentation, Auslander talks about a conversation between the beholder and the documentation. Building upon Gadamer and Benjamin's thinking, he describes a relation of complicity between the beholder and the documented performance, 'co-determined' (after Gadamer) and meeting 'halfway' (after Benjamin) (Auslander 2018:56). For Robertson, reading is a practice of complicity:

The text I read seeks through me to another text; to the extent that I quiet myself, complicity enters its agreement. Whether I call this reflexivity nilling in Arendt's term, or indetermination, as Derrida would have it ... such a seeking is also a precise description of a kind of reading as cryptology. (Robertson 2012:34)

73 One should note here that mental activity does not and cannot exclude physical activity since one is always physically active (in breathing, moving the eyes etc.).

74 My appropriation of this quote is here a displacement because Pristaš originally talks about the confrontation

between the human gaze and the technological gaze (machines viewing images). I apply this displacement considering the object read in performance (the fourth thing, a book, a document) as some manifestation of the technological gaze.

Robertson writes the above in the context of her experience of reading Pauline Réage's *Histoire d'O*, an erotic novel published in 1954 narrating the desire of a person who wants to belong to another. In Pennac's *Rights of the Reader*, the sixth right of the reader is in French 'le droit au bovarysme (maladie textuellement transmissible)' (Pennac 1992:184) translated in English by Sarah Ardizzone as 'the right to mistake a book for real life (a textually transmissible disease)' (2006:163). 'Bovarysme' is what Pennac establishes as 'our first reading state,' it is 'the instant and total gratification of the senses ... nerves quiver, heart races, you get an adrenaline rush, you identify with anything and everything' (2006:163). When our brain momentarily confuses the book's world with reality, our physical sensations as reader inflate, and complicity is at its best.

Complicity through the stimulation of senses is at play in one episode of the performance series *Clean Room* by Dominguez (2010). The second episode⁷⁵ of the third season of *Clean Room* gathers an audience of 'necessary accomplices' in a public site for a secret reading. For this episode entitled 'Book gathering' the audience anonymously and secretly occupies a public space. Each participant holds one little red book. 'Necessary accomplices' know of each other's presence yet they ignore one another and they read. They remain unnoticed to the outside world (Dominguez Royo 2017:16). Inside the red book, erotic lines speak to their senses. The choice of erotic content for the book, which performs in 'Book gathering' is not insignificant. It calls for the right to 'bovarysme.' It is a provocation of sensations to stimulate, like in Robertson's experience from reading *Histoire d'O*, an impression of complicity. This complicity turns into conspiracy (for Dominguez) when it is kept secret to the rest of the world. Conspiracy is the form Dominguez explored in his research of new modes of spectatorship and new forms of participation. He states 'there are many kinds of conspiracies' (2017:6). Hence a need to define the 'poetic conspiracy' of *Clean Room*, building upon the etymology of the term co-spirare:

75 'Clean Room' is a project that follows a mini-series format: each season contains six episodes which must be followed by the same group of spectators ... In

2016 we are premiering the third and final season in Berlin ... confidentiality and secrecy are crucial to this third season' (Dominguez Royo 2017:4-5).

Co-spirare means to breathe with, to breathe the same air, to breathe together ... it's a minimal, almost imperceptible action ... it's an inclusive conspiracy incorporating what every single accomplice feels, desires and pays attention to ... the aim of our conspiracy is to create a poetic space. (Dominguez Royo 2017:6-7).

Dominguez seeks through conspiracy the opening of a poetic space, stutters in daily rhythms, a parallel reality. Collective reading is one of Dominguez's tools to produce his 'poetic conspiracy.' This tool is once again of importance for its signification. Robertson links reading with cryptology, a term she uses in a poetic way to display the hidden, the coded, and the secrecy involved in reading (2012:34). For Robertson, what is really produced in the act of reading remains hidden and invisible.

Reading resists being seen. This is not to say that it has no effect on public life, but that those effects cannot be predetermined, cannot be conveniently mapped and often do not follow causal, or intentional patterns. What I intend for reading is usually not where it takes me. (Robertson 2012:23)

The invisibility of reading and its unpredictability make it a form of participation that is solicited, and yet what is produced by reading is unscripted and unexpected. The response might even remain hidden; it is a secret writing in the moment of performance that may take unexpected paths.

THE HANDS AND THE EYES, THE EYES AND THE HANDS

In the photo installation *Looking and Touching* (2007) from which this chapter's section takes its name, photographer and filmmaker Babette Mangolte randomly places on a table various sized photographs of dances of the 1970s in New York (the Judson Dance Theatre collective). The installation invites the viewer to construct the

performances through an experiential visual and tactile dialogue with the photographs (Auslander 2018:65). Hands and eyes work in close relationship in the solicited participation offered by Mangolte.

In January 2017, I joined the practice of *The breathing archive* by Llaurens in Brussels. For this event, eight people gather around a table. Llaurens places thick piles of printed crumpled A4 on the table. The loose pages form 'a book to do and to undo' (Llaurens Appendix 2017). Participants are invited to collectively edit a poetic document through practices of listening, touching, seeing, and reading. *The breathing archive* (Llaurens 2016) commences with silence. The eight participants silently read the score of the practice, a succession of nine stages. This silent reading already unravels our different gestural habitudes with reading inside a group and our different temporalities in reading. When all have read, we move on to point 0 and 1 of the score. We give our eyes, which have just read, a moment of rest and of withdrawal. The eyes now closed '1- Take a moment to pay attention to your breath and what touches your skin' (Llaurens 2017:np). I close my eyes, I observe my breath, and I turn to the sensations of my skin, of how air touches me, the table touches some surfaces of my hands, the chair. We move to the following stage in the practice, reaching out to piles of crumpled pages. I let my hands meet the wrinkles of paper, its surprising warmth and its volume. It feels like fabric. We crumple the pages. Through iterative movements of crumpling and un-crumpling the archive breathes more deeply. The rustles tingle in my ears. I open my eyes. Light touches my retina. The tactile qualities of my hands transfer to my gaze that turns tactile in this moment of reading. Light touches my eyes. Like in a dream, forms appear. I play with my attention. I see blurry texts; now one sharp letter, and here a word, the thicker name of one interviewee printed in bold. My neighbours' voices reach my ear. Words keep growing in the polyphonic landscape we shape. The archive breathes; words peel away from her lungs. There are sentences. Paper crumples. There is a camera on the table among what became a disorganized mount of crumpled pages. There are plural points of view. Llaurens invites us to close the practice. The archive takes a few more breaths and papers soon return to their bags.

The breathing archive (Llaurens 2016) is a practice that takes place in some kind of space where – in my opinion – spectatorial and participatory activities are required. *The breathing archive* is not a reading practice in Llaurens' view (Appendix 2017). But it does appeal to the movement of reading. Llaurens presents *The breathing archive* as a 'live document' where the focus is on the experience of the document rather than on the document itself (Llaurens 2017:np). A bit like in Mangolte's *Looking and Touching* (2007) participants in *The breathing archive* sort out and rearrange pages and words. Llaurens cultivates the participants' attention, guiding a focus on the hand-eye coordination. Looking is touching. From the practice, eyes gain tactile qualities, they push, they press, they release, they weight. Reading is physical.

I think about reading as a physical act: the movement of the eyes, the tone of the voice, the pace, the organisation of the body, the sound of words, the taste of words in the mouth, the loss of definition. I remember myself as a child repeating a word like [in French] 'tomate-tomate-tomate-tomate' until meaning would dissolve into sound. (Llaurens Appendix 2017)

In this approach to reading, the relation to meaning is of variable distance. Meaning can appear, be deciphered, interpreted, but it can also dissolve. The iterative movements – of breathing, of crumpling and un-crumpling – in *The breathing archive*, form a process of emergence for the production of poetic documentation. In an iterative momentum, some more loops take place and the practice is pulled into circularity. 'The object of document is also used as a tool for documentation. We are documenting hand-eye coordination with hand-eye coordination. The content is the tool' (Llaurens Appendix 2017).

3.3. Documentation: a book to do and to undo

BOOKS – GONE

Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine (Edvardsen 2010), the one-on-one performance where performers become books, is an ensemble of books by great writers;⁷⁶ books which turned immaterial through the performers' learning by heart. Reading in performance in these circumstances could be seen as a reading of undone books, of books that are gone.⁷⁷ The books that are read in the performance of *THFAITAS* are neither undone nor gone, they moved. Books slid. Words took off and flew from pages to memories, from memories to voices, from voices to ears. In later developments of *THFAITAS* the books returned to the page, from memories to the performers' notebooks and they became physical books each with a particular cover, a spine, a skin, a texture, a weight. As a reader and spectator of *THFAITAS* twice I picked up books that had gone into someone's memory. The third time I encountered the project, I did not pick a book but I sat in the 'library' (in the Galerie Ravenstein in Brussels) where I could see a few people sitting side by side, one speaking and the other listening. I could hear the overlap of books. When leaving this 'library' I took with me three books, which had returned to the page. These books rewritten from memory carry in them gaps and rhythm. They softly present the bodies they travelled through (by means of design, of spaces on the page, of punctuation, of font, of handwriting, and of short testimonies). *THFAITAS* continues to perform every now and then when I gaze at these books on my shelf, or when I take them along on a trip.

76 A list of thirty-five titles is in the library of living books for the Oslo Biennale 2019-2024. See <https://www.oslobiennalen.no/event/mette-edvardsen-time-has-fallen-asleep-in-the-afternoon-sunshine-2/>

77 In the work *No Title*, Edvardsen erases objects by naming them and saying 'gone'. (See Edvardsen 2019:25)

How is *THFAITAS* an example of reading in performance? There is indeed no material fourth thing disturbing the gaze that stretches from the viewer to the performer. Might the invisible memorized book still be a fourth thing, which performs precisely through its absence? As spectator reader in *THFAITAS* I am aware books have gone into memories. In the time of the performance, the book is a gap. In its material absence, it manifests in other ways. As a spectator I have seen and touched books before and I carry this knowledge about 'bookness' with me in the performance. I then read this absent book in the performance while the living version of the book sits by my side. My spectating and my reading happen from the side. Words reach my right ear more than my left (I happened to sit twice on the left side of the living books). My eyes meet an absent book and everything that surrounds me at the same time. There is absorption and distance (qualities I developed in chapter two 'Holding nothing together'). *THFAITAS* is an example of reading in performance because it invokes, despite the absence of the physical book, the gaze of the reader.

The example of *THFAITAS* demonstrates the complex ontology of documentation in performance. This *free* documentation can be fully absent; it could be nothing. To support my thinking of what this nothing might be, I will briefly allow myself a digression to insert here and to play with a philosophical concept from object-oriented ontology (Harman 2018). In object-oriented ontology, the distinction object-subject is challenged. Philosopher Tristan Garcia, whose work has been grouped with Harman's object-oriented ontology, examines thingness (2014). Garcia's insight on the matter of thingness informs my attempt at defining *free* documentation. I draw a parallel between Garcia's thinking of the nothing in relation to the something in order to construct my own thinking of the relation between documentation and performance.

There was not something 'rather than' nothing, for, if there was nothing before something, it's because this nothing was already something, something other than what there was afterwards. (Garcia 2014:49)

I propose to replace in these sentences the word nothing by the word documentation, and the word something by the word performance.⁷⁸

If there was documentation before performance, it's because this documentation was already a performance, a performance other than what there was afterwards.

The exchanges of words that I apply here seem paradoxical considering the materiality of documentation and the often-discussed immaterial and volatile qualities of performance (Phelan 1993).⁷⁹ But what emerges is first a re-consideration of these associations, and then an entanglement of documentation with performance. I arrive at the conclusion that, as Auslander puts it: 'performance documents are not derivatives of earlier events ... but should be understood as sites of performance in themselves' (2018:97). Documentation in performance – *free* documentation – is performance and it knows the immaterial and volatile qualities too, different materialities.

WHATEVER MATERIAL

The poetic documentation in Llaurens' practice of *The breathing archive* (2016) includes the beholder. The participant, or attender, or spectator, and reader, is included in Llaurens' documentation by means of crumpling. The document of *The breathing archive* lives inside tote bags. It is a book made of loose and crumpled printed A4 pages. When I attended the practice in January 2017,⁸⁰ these piles reminded me of the pile of paper that stands next to my printer; paper I'll reuse to write, to draw, and to recycle. My pile of papers did not meet as many hands as the one forming the document of *The breathing archive*, my A4 sheets aren't crumpled. The crumpled pages of *The breathing archive* are like strata of thought, layers of an unfolded brain. Their *crumplitude* draws on each page some folds and some volume evoking miniature landscapes to imaginative minds. During the practice, the loose pages encounter yet more hands

78 I intentionally associate nothing with documentation (which is often recognized for its materiality and thingness) and I associate something with performance (which is often associated with immateriality and volatility). I am informed by gone books that perform as gaps, and I am informed by performance practices that produce 'things.'

79 Phelan claims that ephemerality is in performance's nature and documentation is ontologically distinct from performance (1993:146). These claims have been countered by Auslander, who argues that 'performance is not ephemeral, in that it inevitably leaves something behind' and that documentation is 'a performance in its own right' (2018:1-2).

80 Link to the post-master program a pass' event *Landings* <https://apass.be/landings/>

crumpling them, folding, holding, and travelling along the lines of the papers' wrinkles.

The documentation of (and in) *The breathing archive* is marked by readers' hands, is rearranged and reordered by them. Llaurens refers to the document in *The breathing archive* as a book to do and to undo; a doing and undoing that she relates to knowledge which for her should be done and undone in order to remain alive.⁸¹ The content of this poetic documentation consists in its form more than in its printed matters. Printed matters actually slide and shift through time and after being digested by different contexts.⁸² Poetic documentation implies 'dissolution into the strange' (Bataille in Llaurens 2017a:np). In the example of *The breathing archive*, poetic documentation is characterized by unstable, fluid content, and by the physical vulnerability of its support. Poetic documentation is, like Llaurens indicates, a kind of documentation that addresses disappearance to which the form of crumpled paper and paper pellets refers.

Continuing the proposal I introduced in '1.3. Documentation: non-representational', *free* documentation accumulates the qualities of other forms of documentation. I suggest that it is through this accumulation of features that this documentation, which is read in performance, becomes *free*. Like poetic documentation, *free* documentation always includes their readers into iterative loops that take part to the production of the performance. Like poetic documentation, *free* documentation detaches itself from the straightforward communication of meaning. It can be an absence appreciated for its absence thanks to the reading it induces. 'Reading, I enter a relational contract with whatever material' (Robertson 2012:15). Like performative documentation, *free* documentation is a performance (in the performance), and like theatrical documentation *free* documentation is a site for performance too.

In this chapter, I considered participation and spectatorship and I observed how reading in performance foregrounds the responsibility of the spectator. Yet, it does not point at spectators. Reading in performance does not turn spectators or participants into the subjects, coming before the artwork that is produced. Reading in performance lets us – researchers, curators, artists – pay attention to the artwork

81 In French, Llaurens writes: 'un livre à faire et à défaire – tout comme un savoir pour rester vivant est à faire et à défaire' (Appendix 2017). The French word 'faire' can be translated by 'to do', but also 'to make.' There is a double meaning; to make and unmake a book is a proposition that insists on the form of the book.

82 The printed matter on the pages of the archive was at first about Llaurens' research within the post-master program a pass in Brussels; it later consisted of texts from Sarma's anthology on Lisa Nelson as well as texts emanating from Llaurens' research on poetic documentation.

and to what is being produced in the artwork. While reading in performance, participation is subtle and takes place in immanence with the performance and with the documentation. The gaze becomes tactile, absorbed, wandering through the artwork, or attempting to take off. In performance, *free* documentation is a fourth thing with performers, audience and performance; *free* documentation plays with materialities to the point it can be played out by its very absence.

Chapter 4. PAPIERS

What is at stake is the very redefinition of knowledge. For what research-creation does is ask us to engage directly with a process which, in many cases, will not or cannot be articulated in language.
Erin Manning, 'Against Method' 2016

The guests, the host, the readers, the writer, the magician, and the dance that has never been danced live within this thesis and beyond it within a collection of papers: *les papiers*. There is the simple yet magical accordion pleated paper 'Papier multiforme;' the textured, slightly transparent and bland 'Papier comestible;'⁸³ the pocket friendly, post-mail friendly, inedible *Papier incomestible* (Gallier 2020).⁸⁴ There are unbound pages with drawings on top of which pens doodled; tactile eyes wander on *Papier gribouillé*,⁸⁵ carving paths time and time again. There is the paper that hosts guests and ghosts: *Papiers voisins*, on the threshold of this thesis. There is the paper that invokes guests and ghosts through the muffled space of the telephone line: *Papier téléphone*.⁸⁶ The cave, the small papers, the giant.⁸⁷ *Les papiers*, are surfaces for images to appear. Like in a dictionary where words are used to define other words, the performative forms of *papiers* interconnect and are co-dependent,

83 In the performance *Papier multiforme*, *Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018).

84 Book published by De Nieuwedansbibliotheek (Gallier 2020).

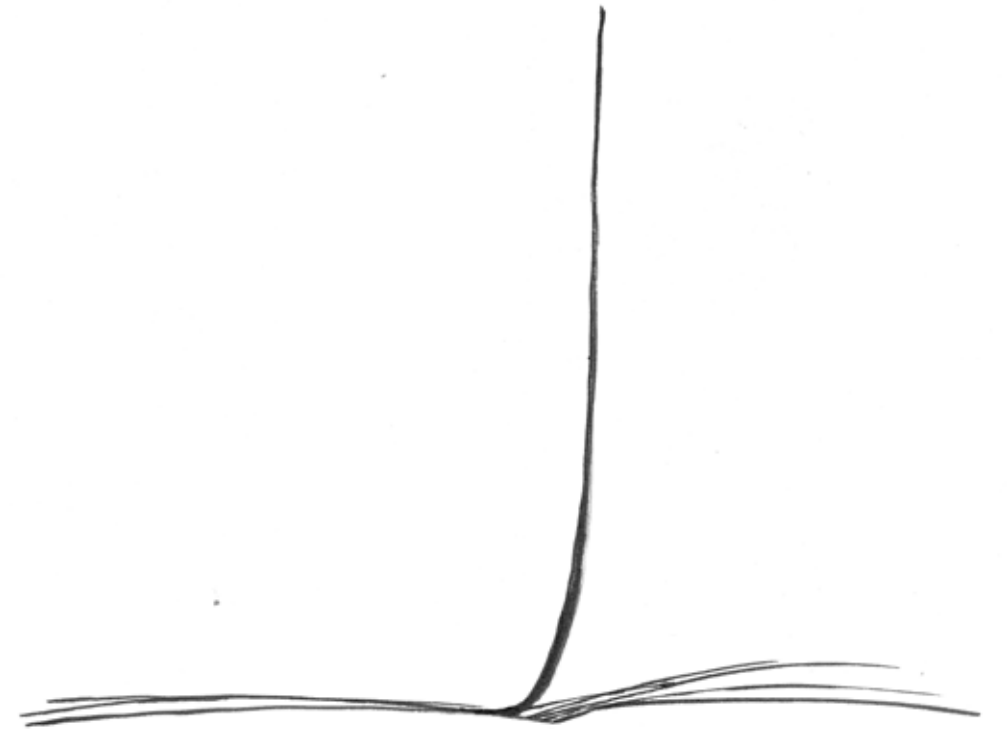
85 *Papier gribouillé* was scanned and printed on the following pages.

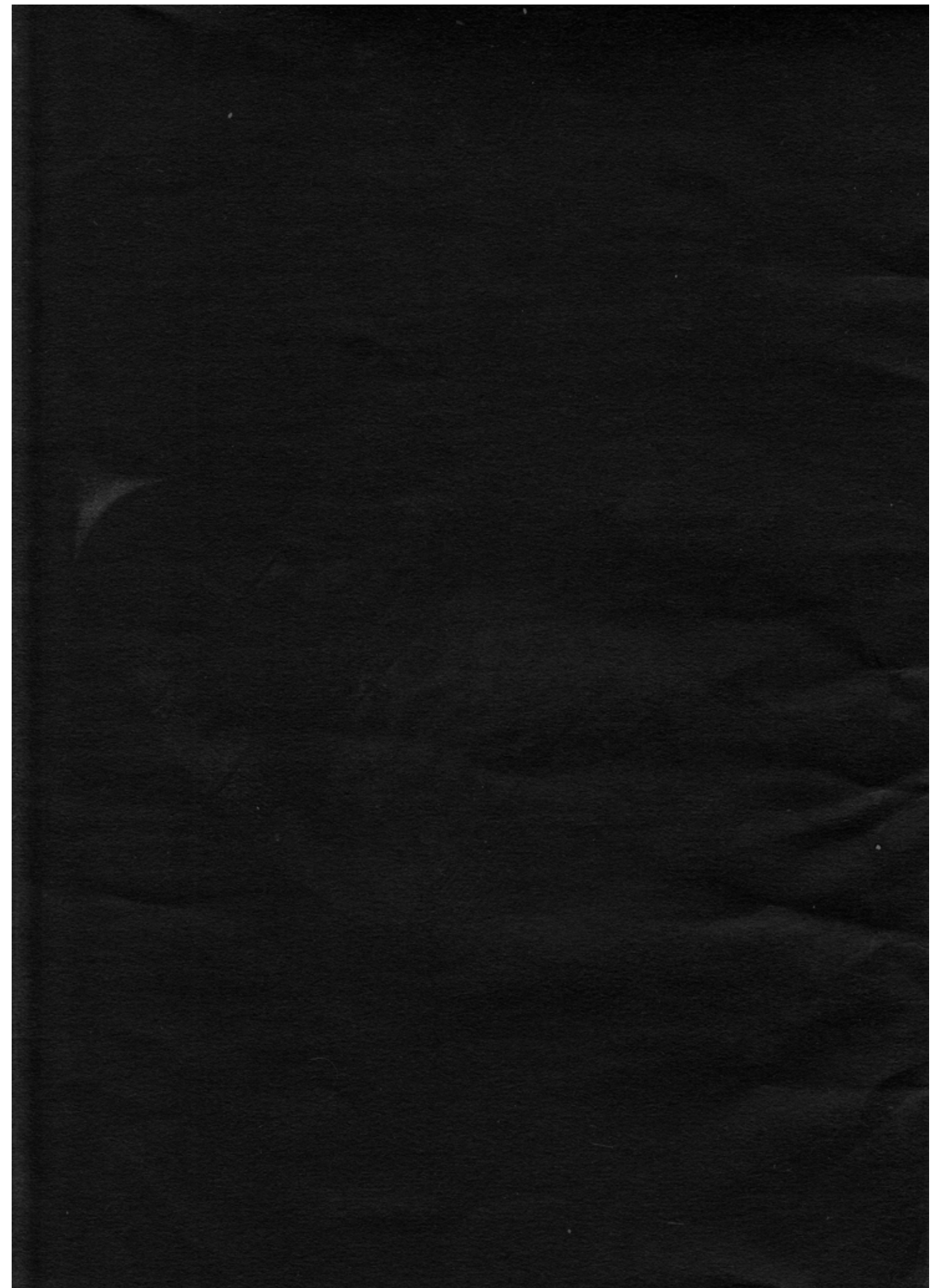
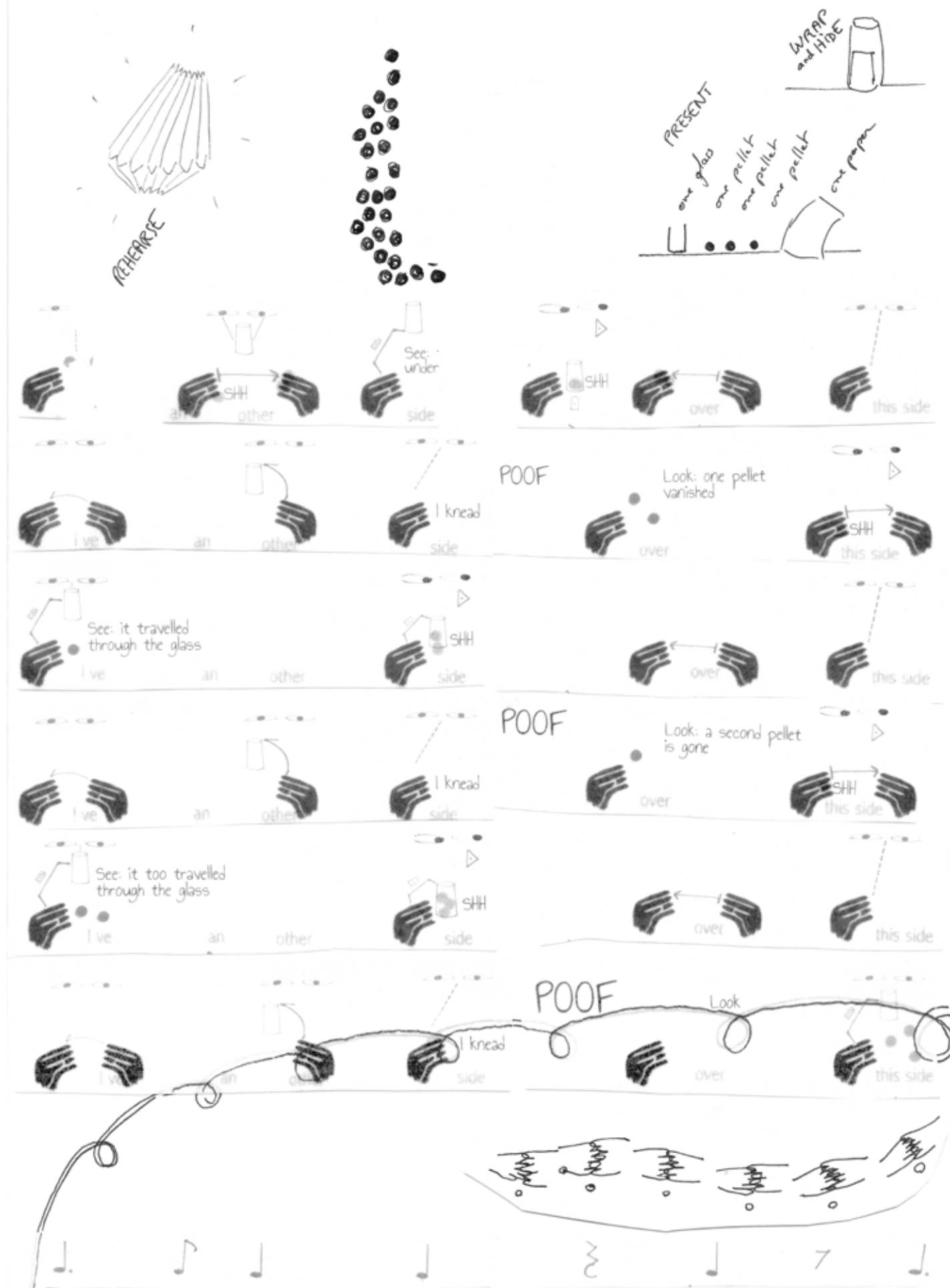
86 *Papier téléphone* is a performance over the phone where artists Nina Boas, Camille Gerbeau, Katinka Marac, and Emilie Gallier perform a tactile reading of *Papier gribouillé*. This practice was commissioned

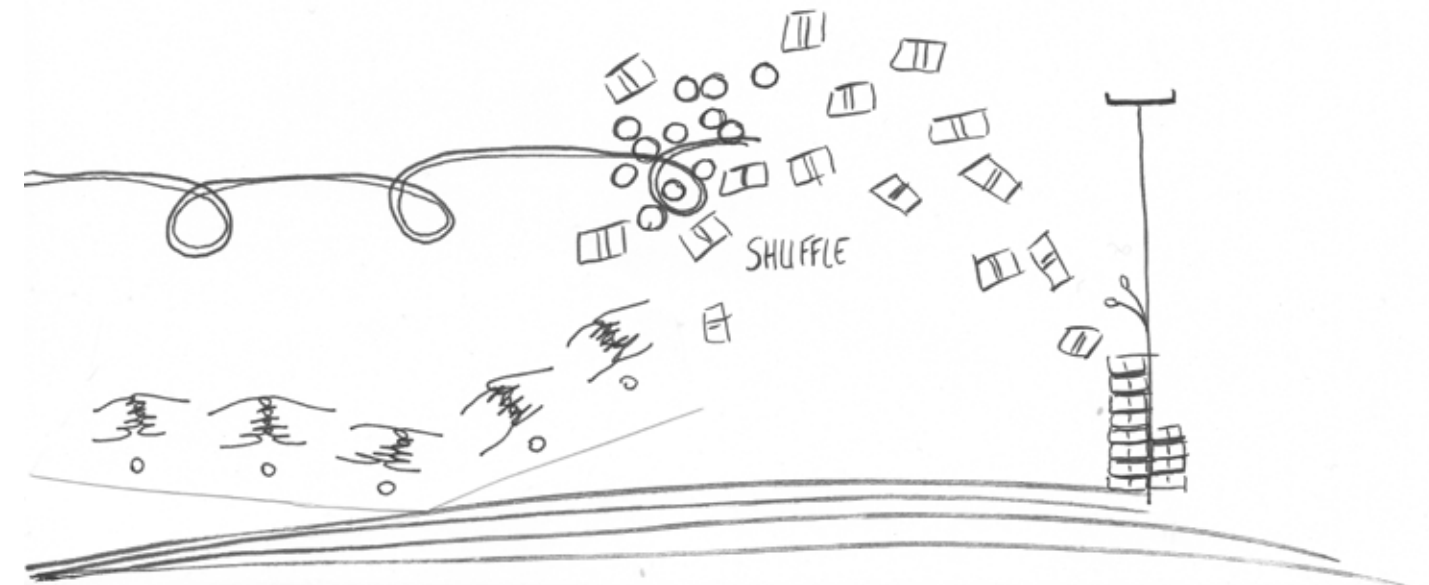
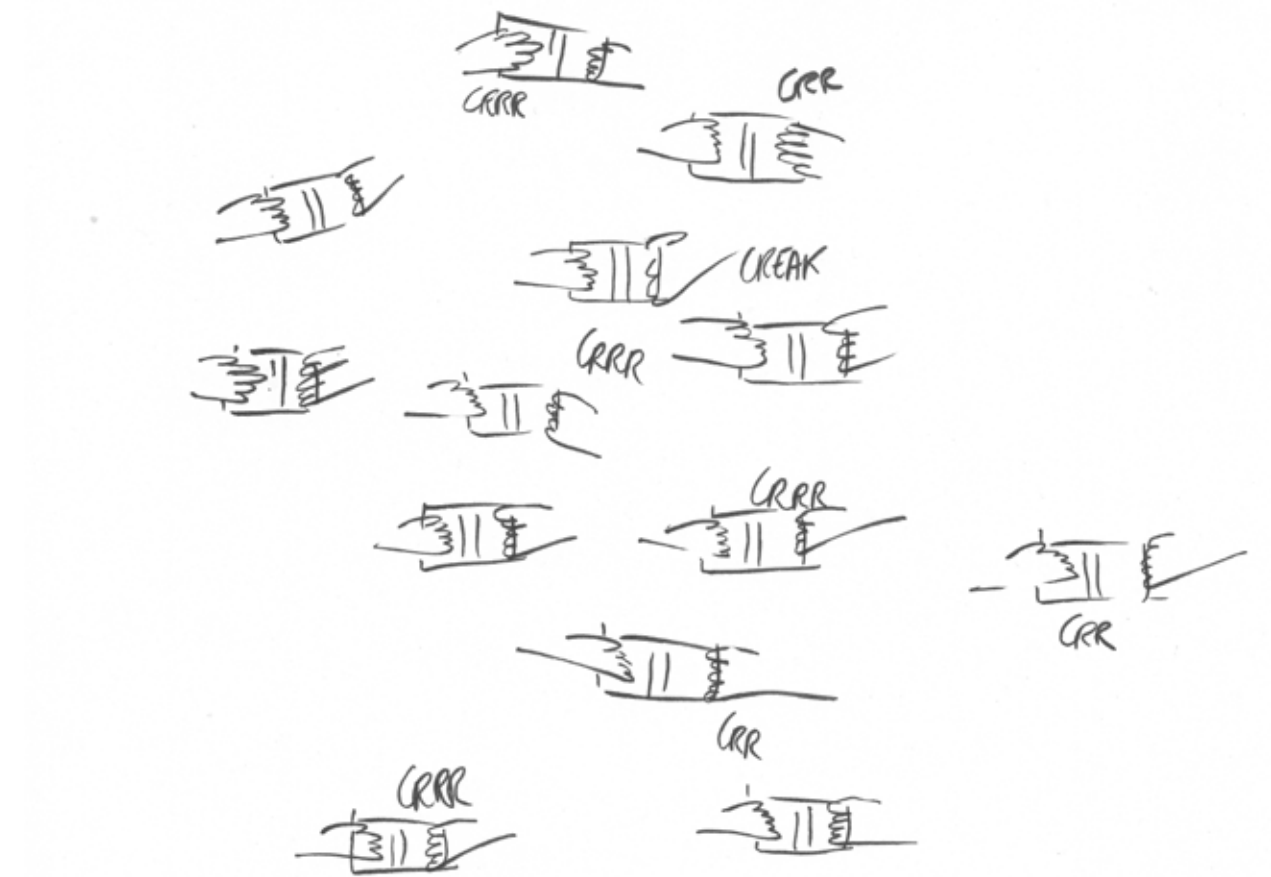
by the interdisciplinary art venue *iii* (instrument inventors initiative, The Hague) in April 2020. *Papier téléphone* was further developed and performed in October 2020 (within the program of 'Dial-a-spectacle' supported by De Nieuwedansbibliotheek, the Dutch Embassy in the United Kingdom, and PØST Cie Emilie Gallier). Recordings are available here: <http://post-cie.com/papiertelephone.php>

87 Words from *Papier incomestible* (Gallier 2020:np).

« Good evening. Thank you for being here. A large black paper hangs in the middle of the space. It is the page of a giant book inside of which we stand. On both sides of this page, there is a singular page, a space in its own right. There are here two spaces, in one. Which gives us three spaces. The two separate spaces, different pages, and the one entire space, the book. »







REHEARSE AND SPEAK

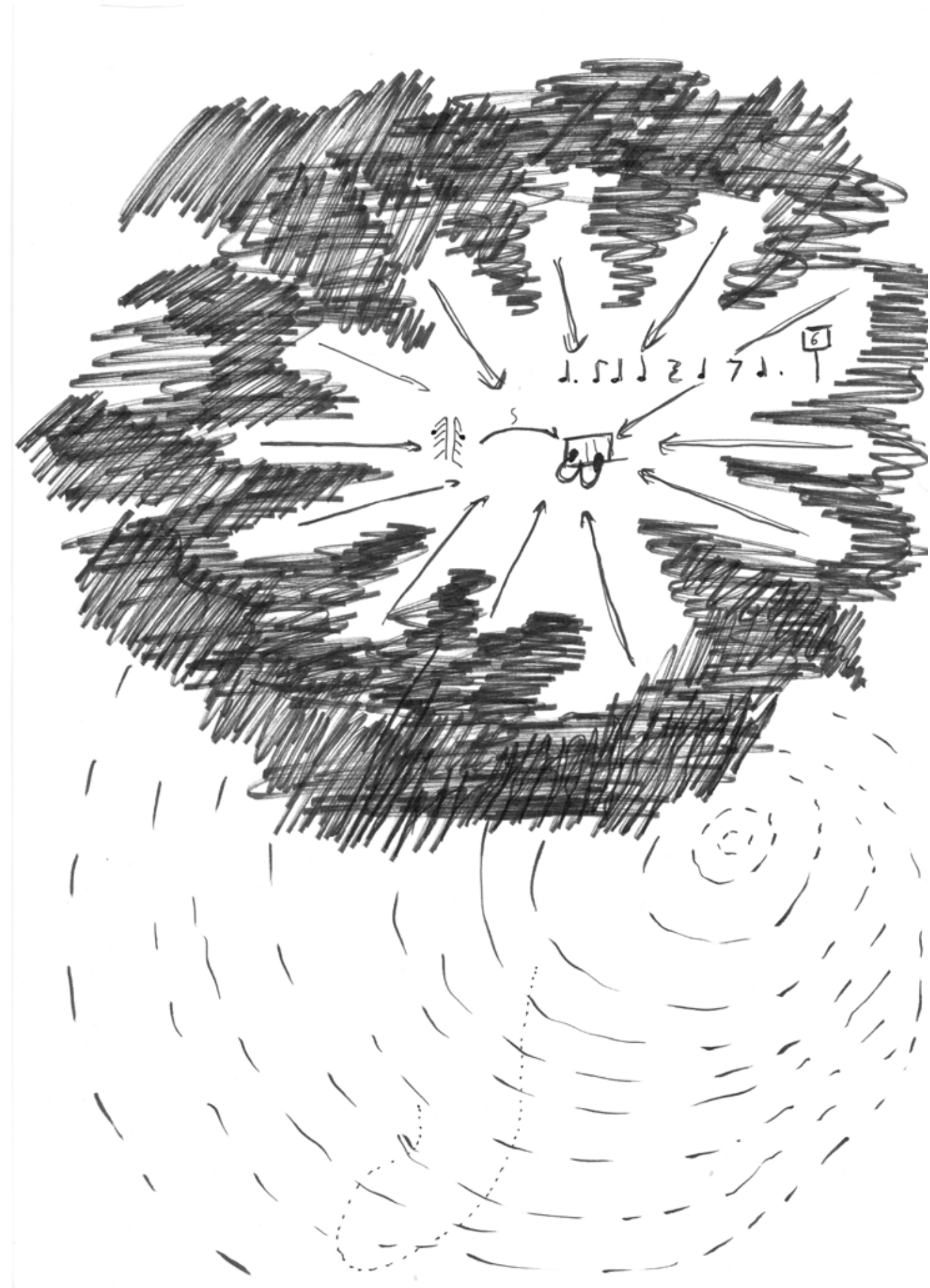
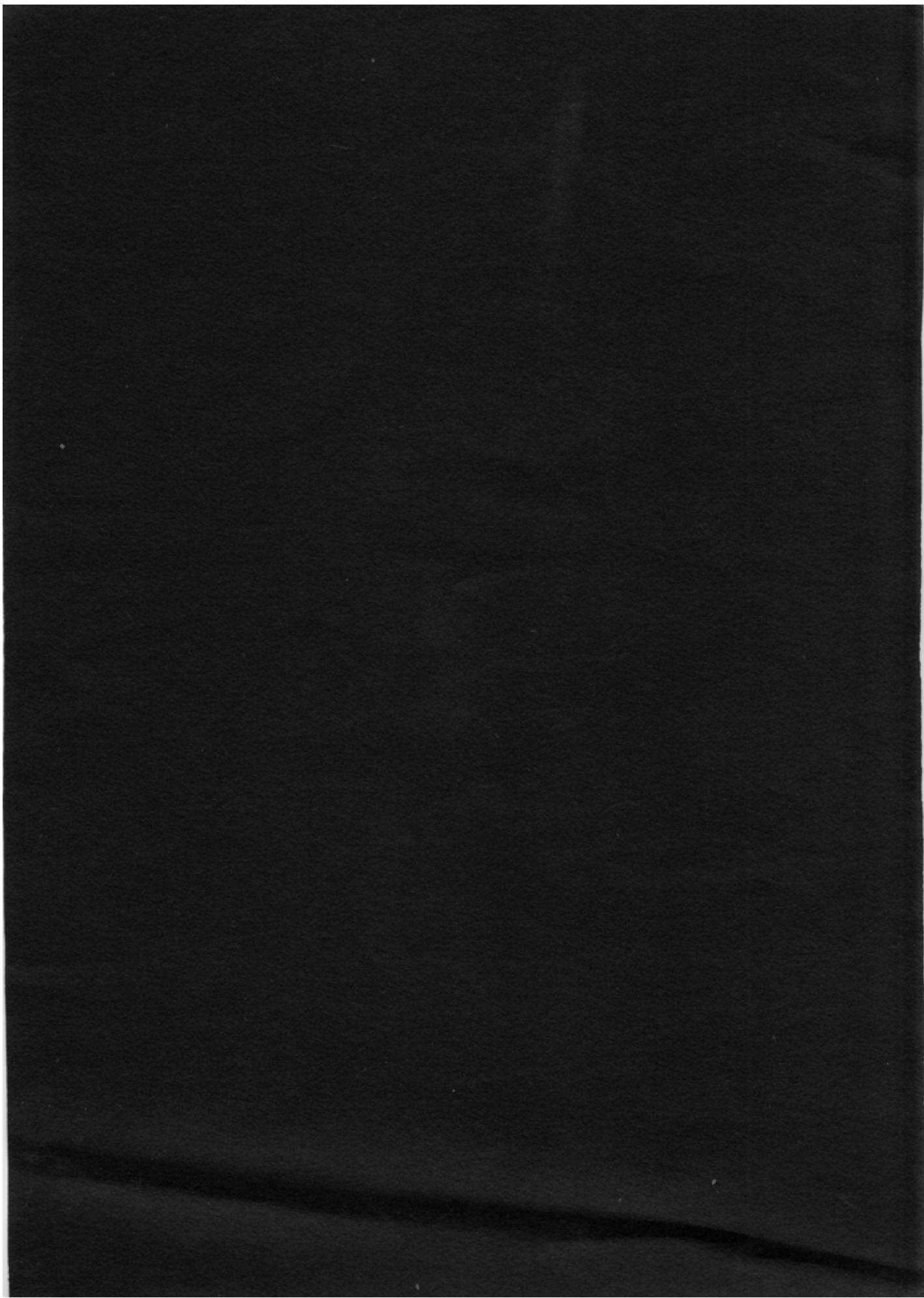
The ma - gician has arrived early
 The o - ther guests are still to come
 They have been lured by the promise of magic
 The ma - gician has been lured
 By the pro - mise of an audience
 She cer - tainly wouldn't mind an audience



REHEARSE IN
SILENCE



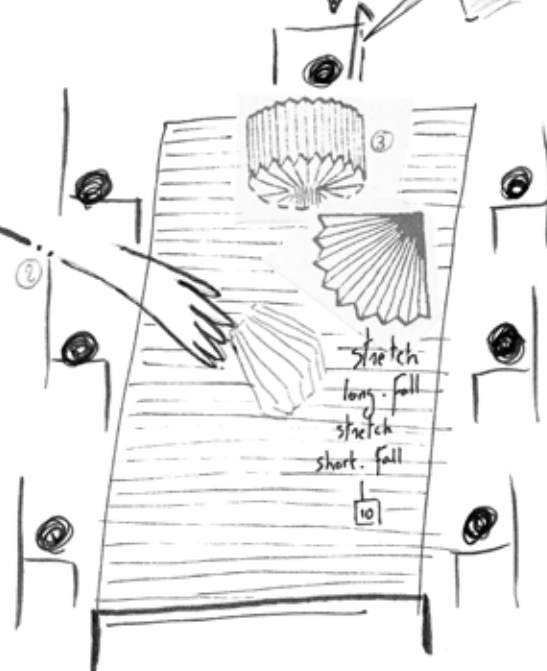
THE VANISHING GLASS





this side

over on



stretch
long. fall
stretch
short. fall

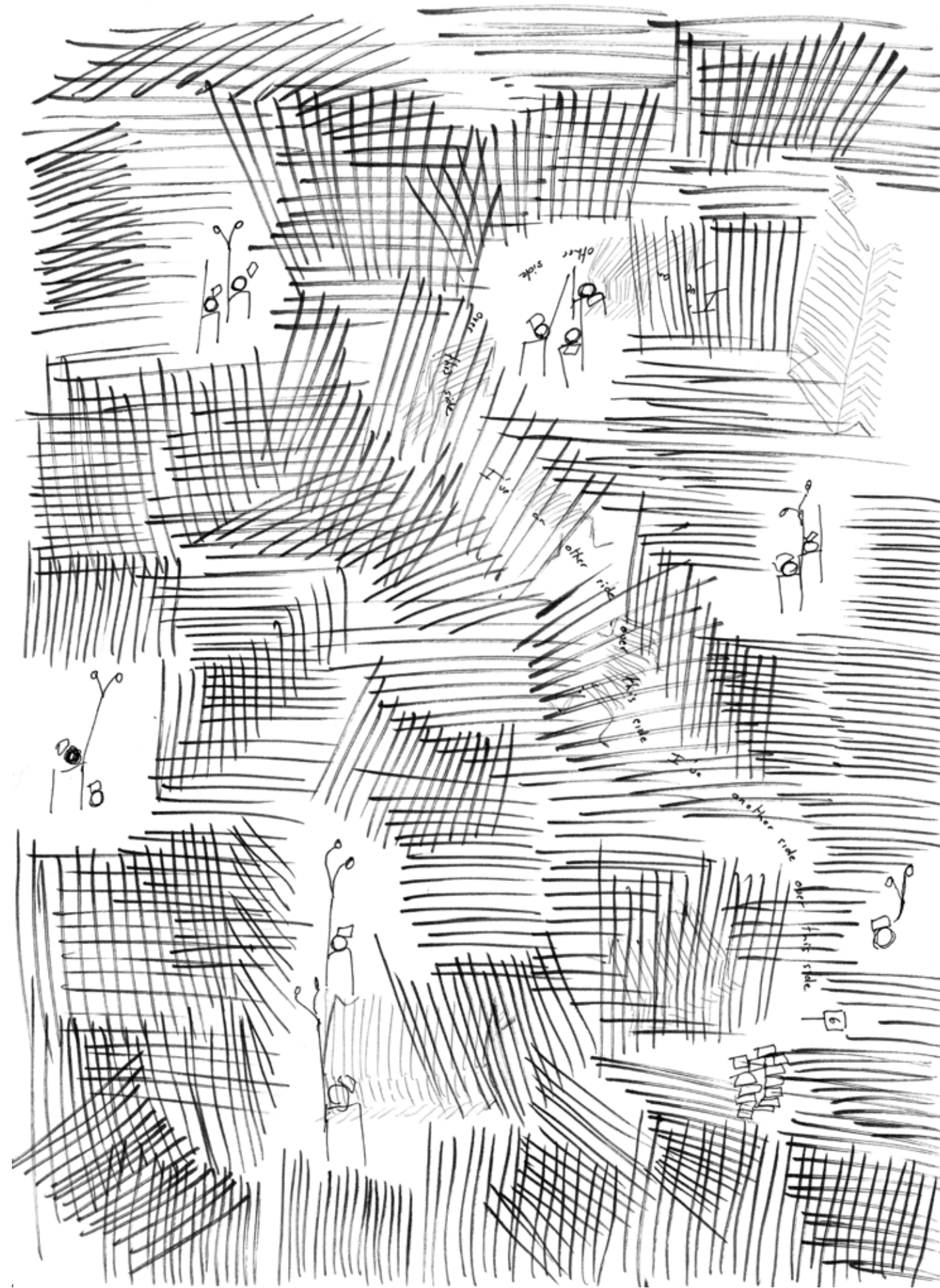
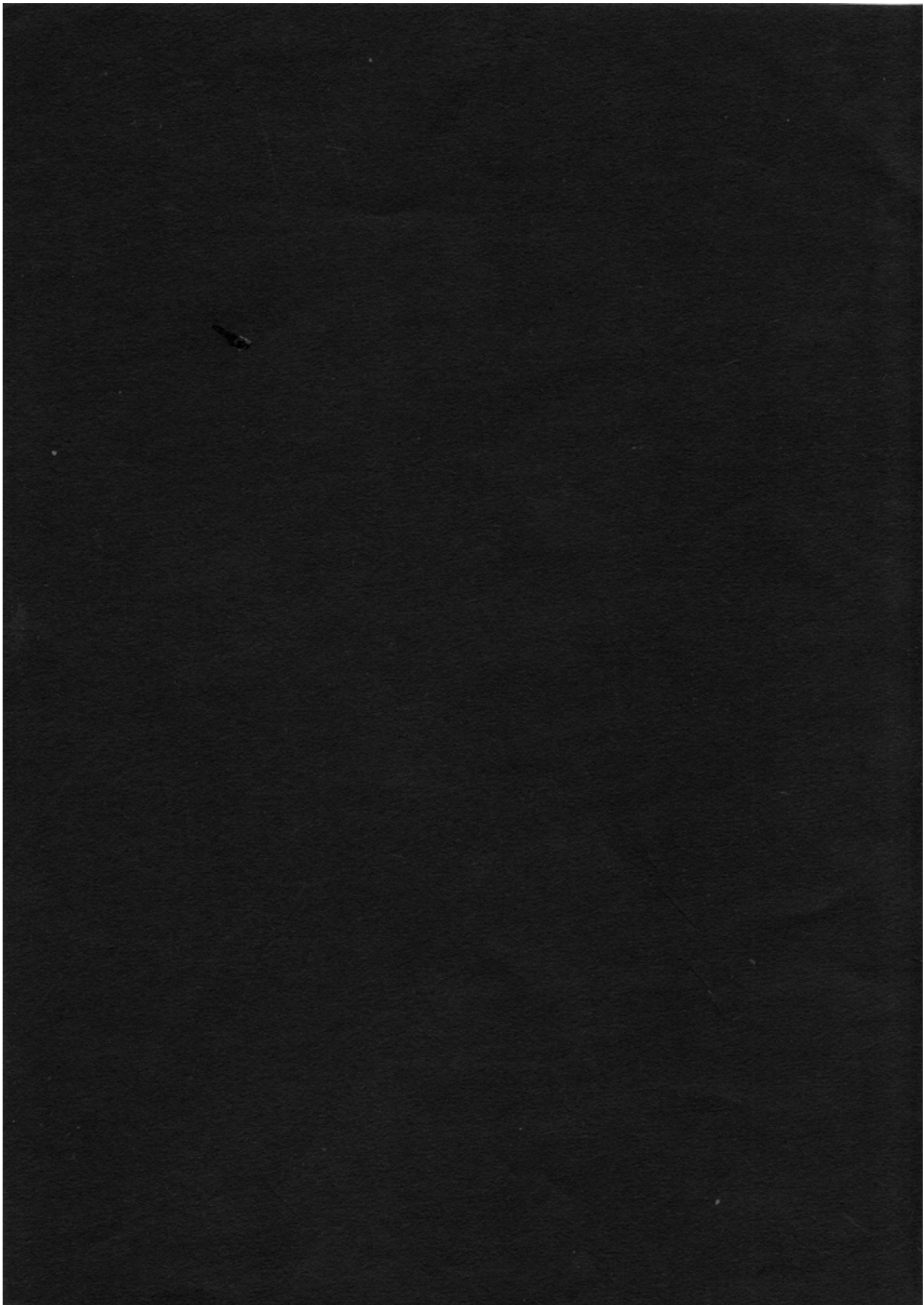
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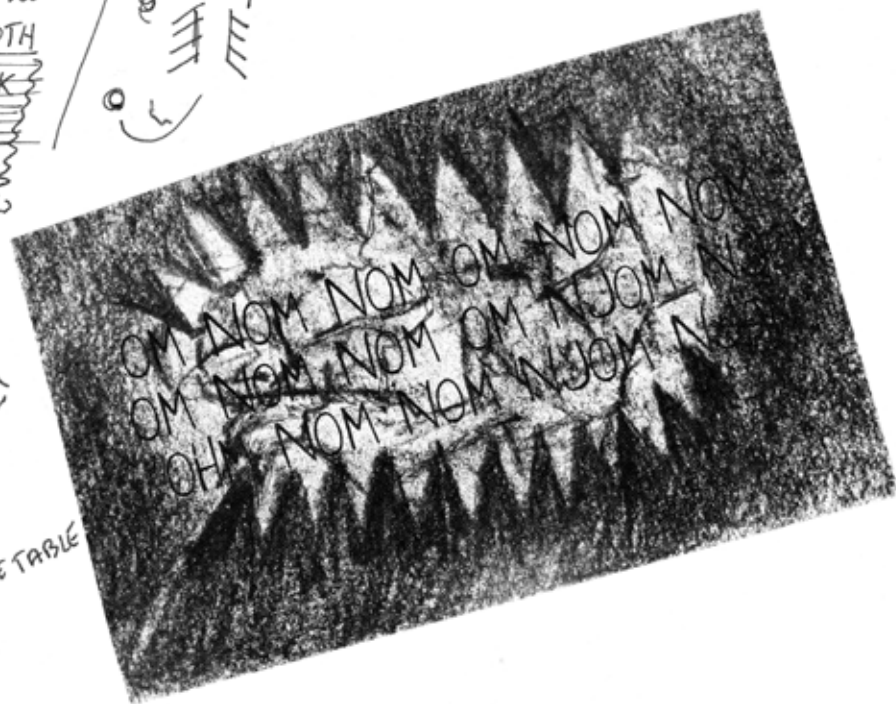
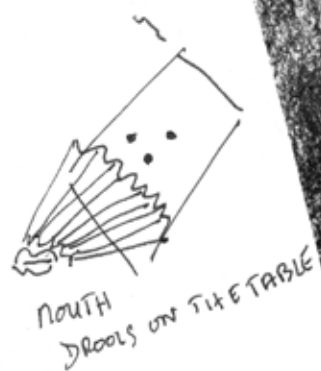
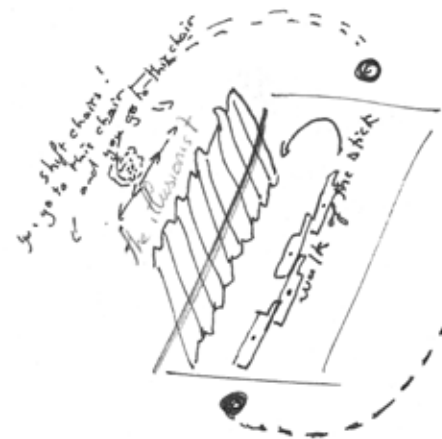
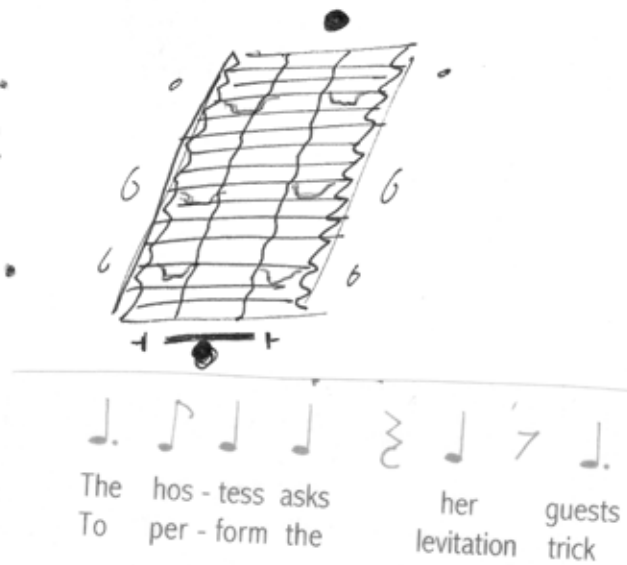
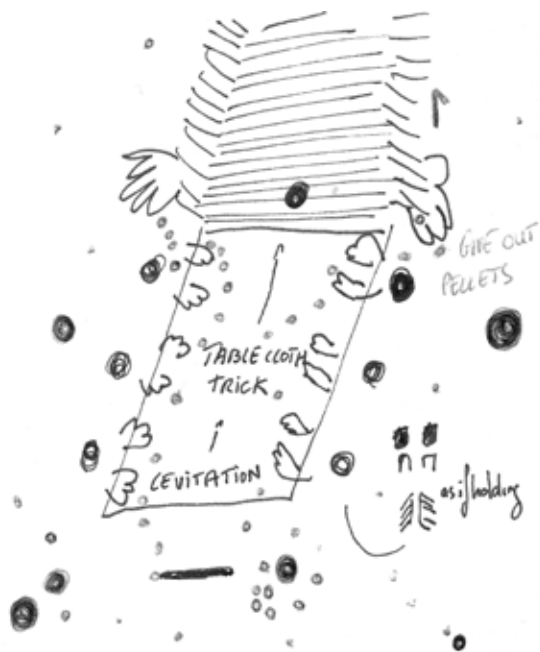
① The magician invites
To join her at

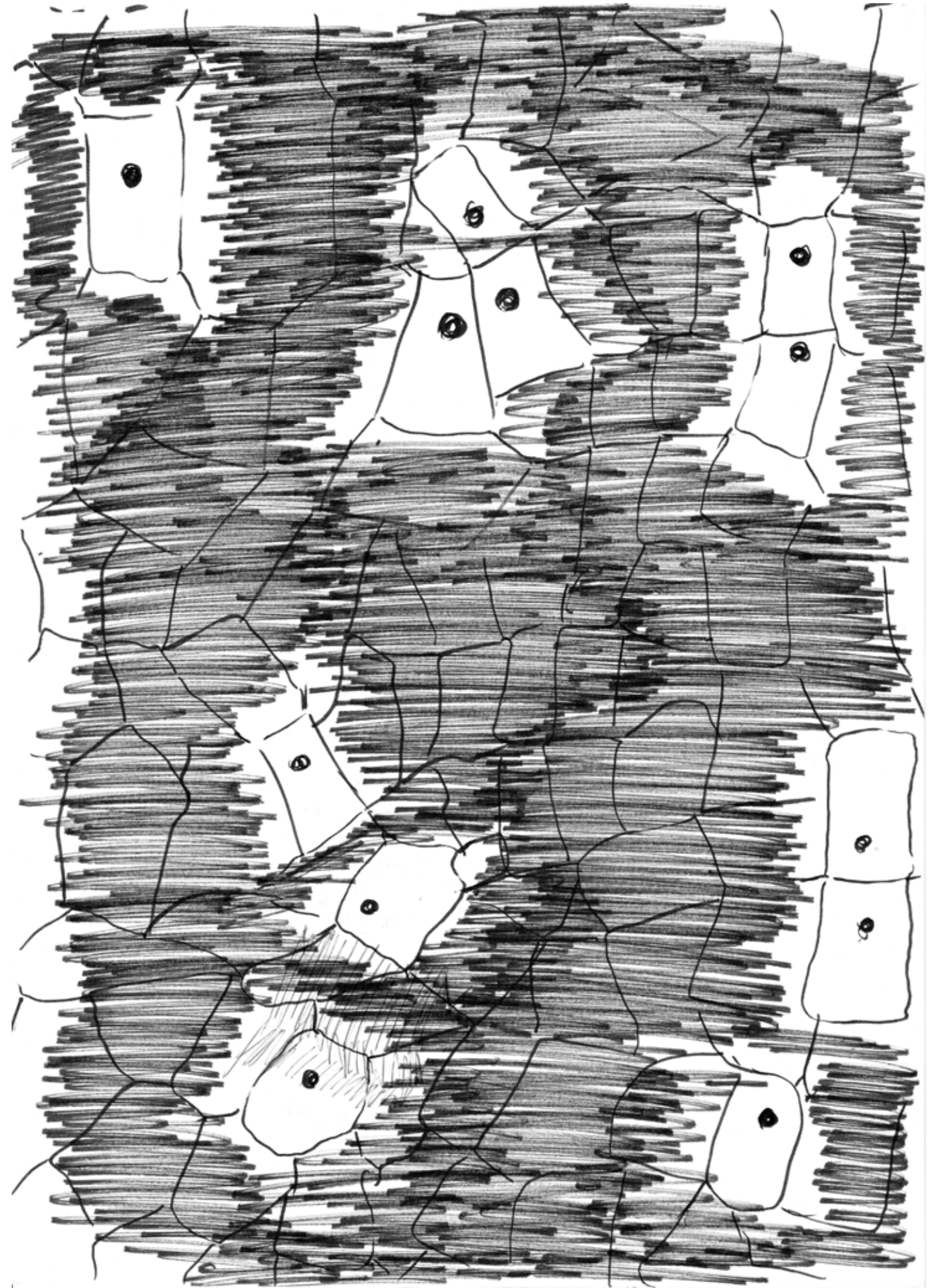
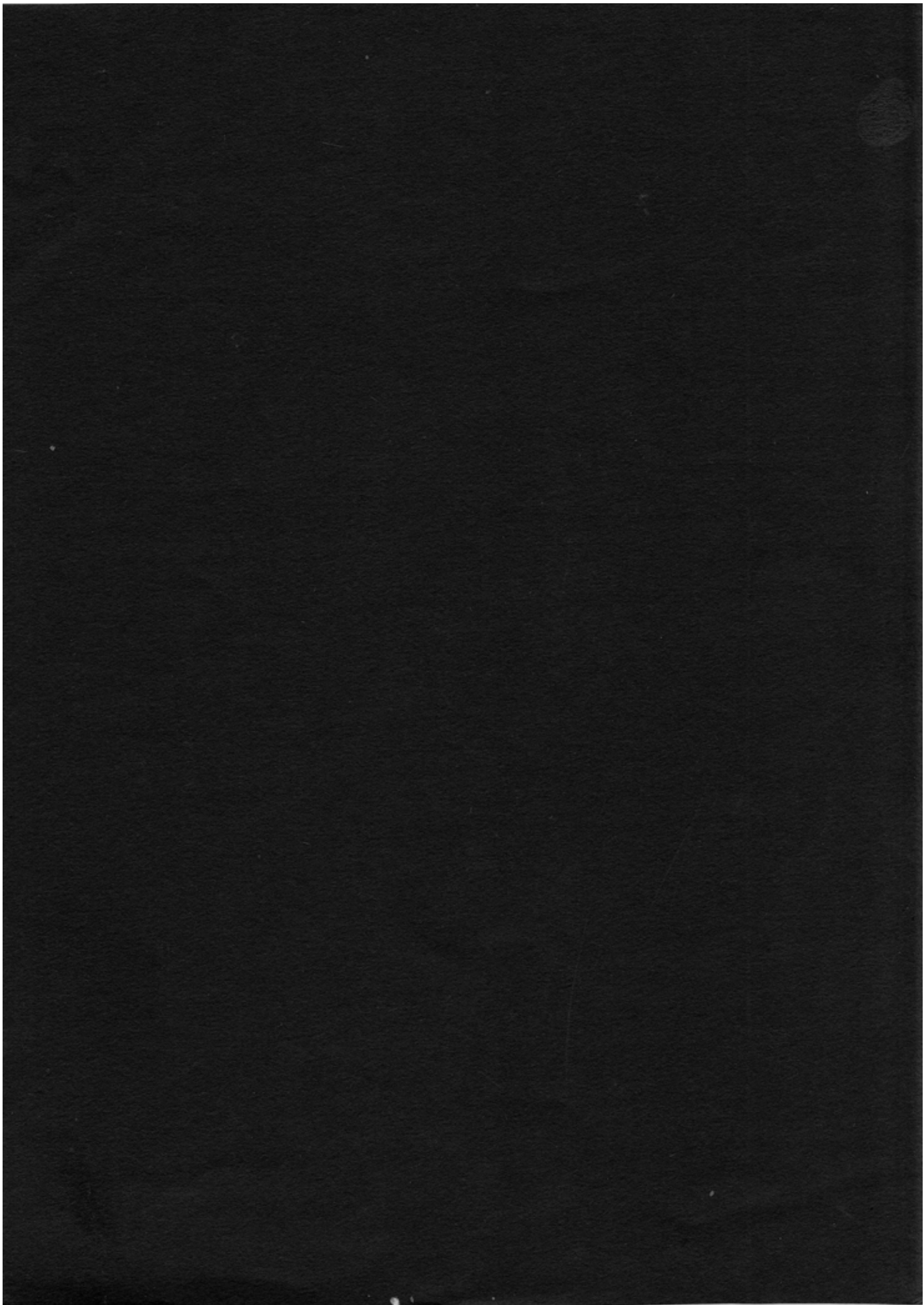
six
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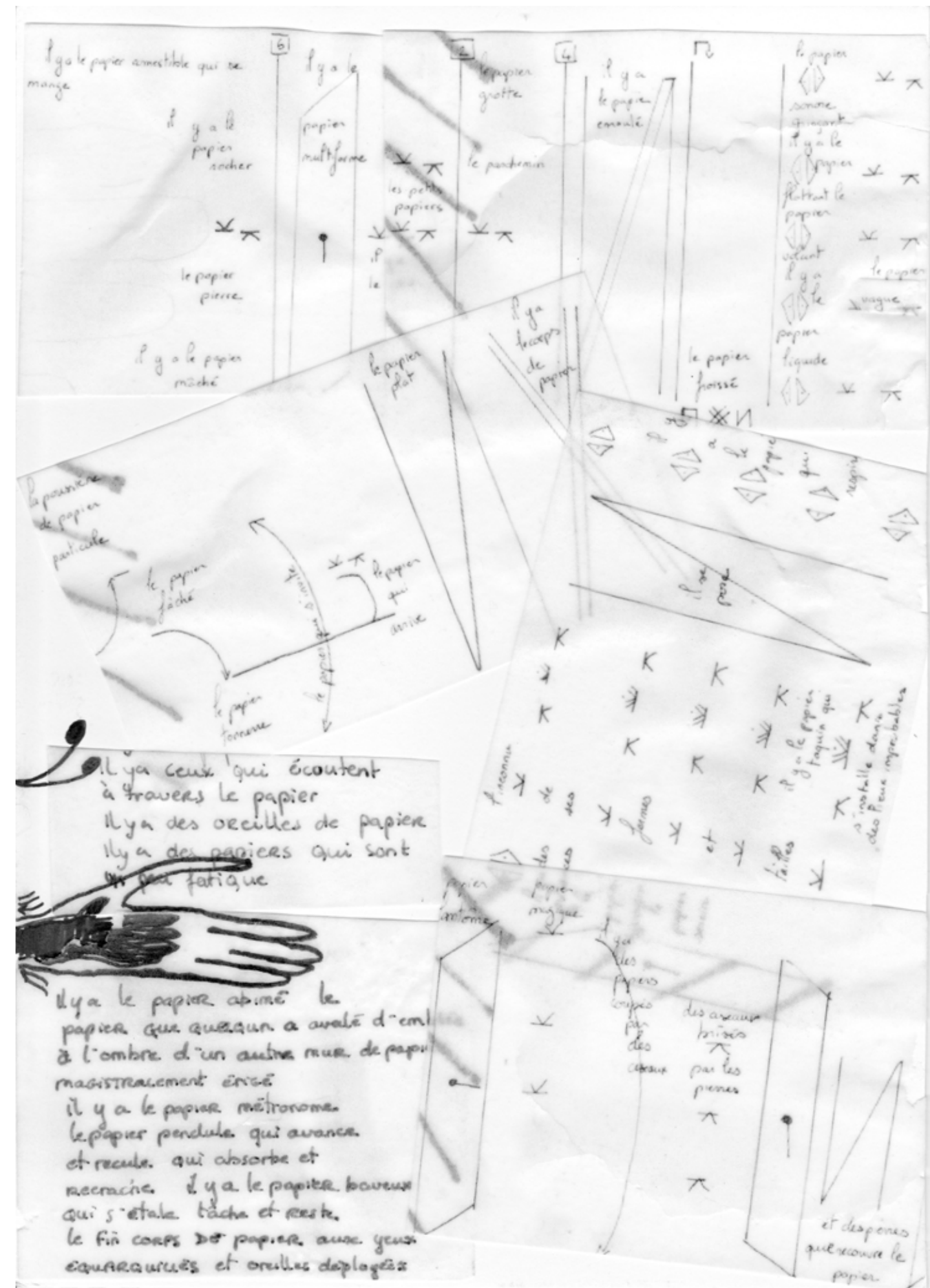
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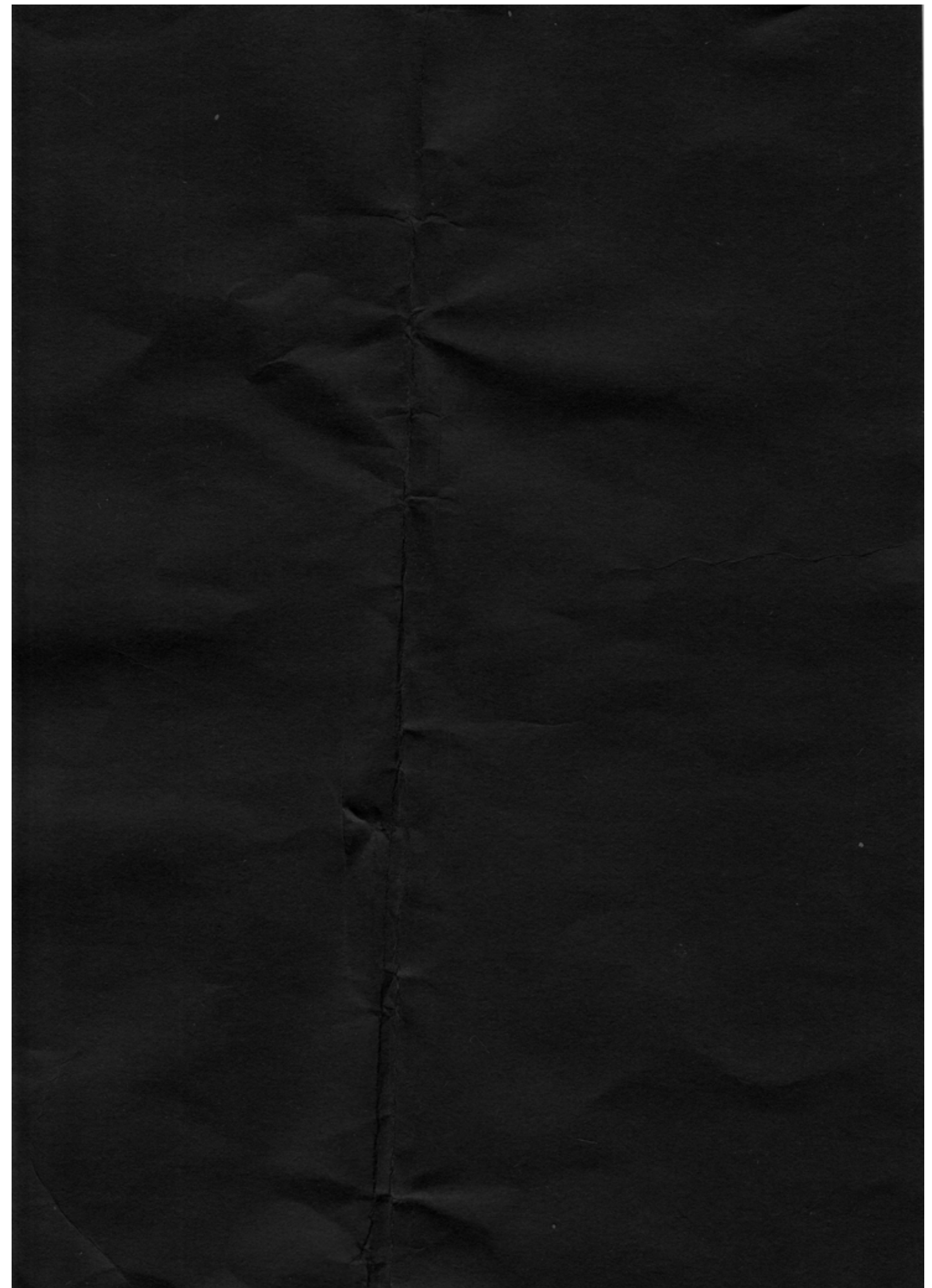
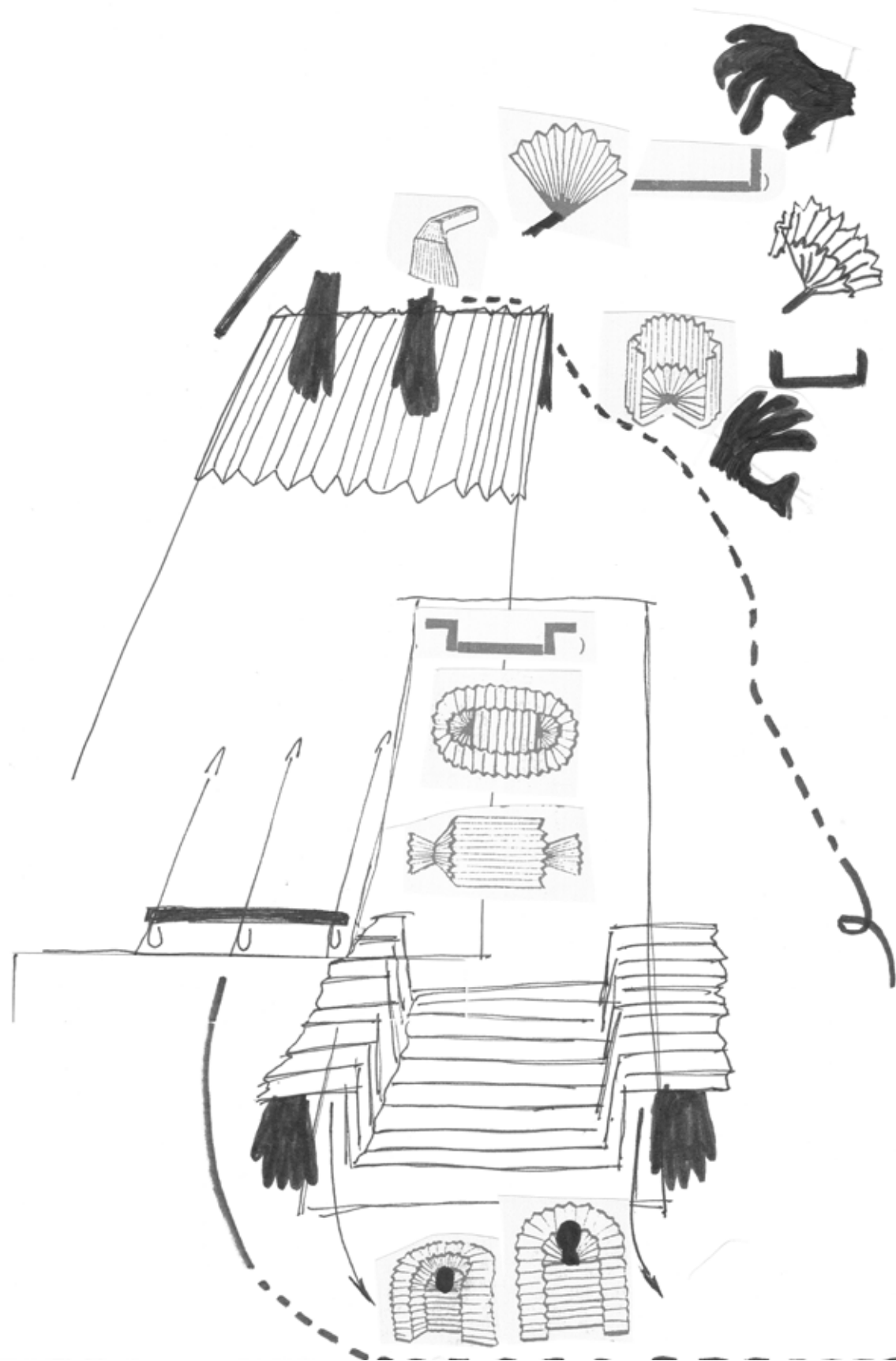
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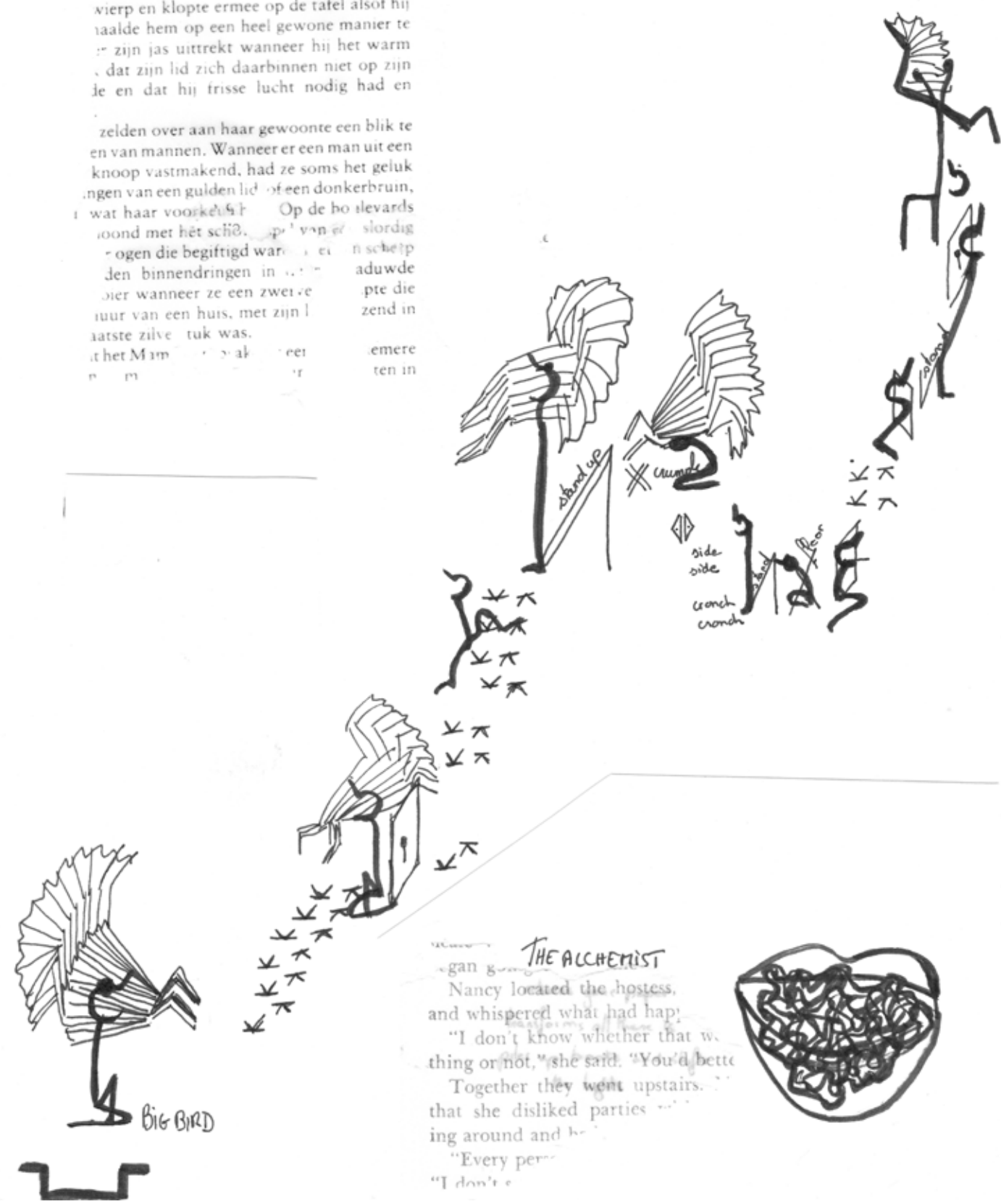


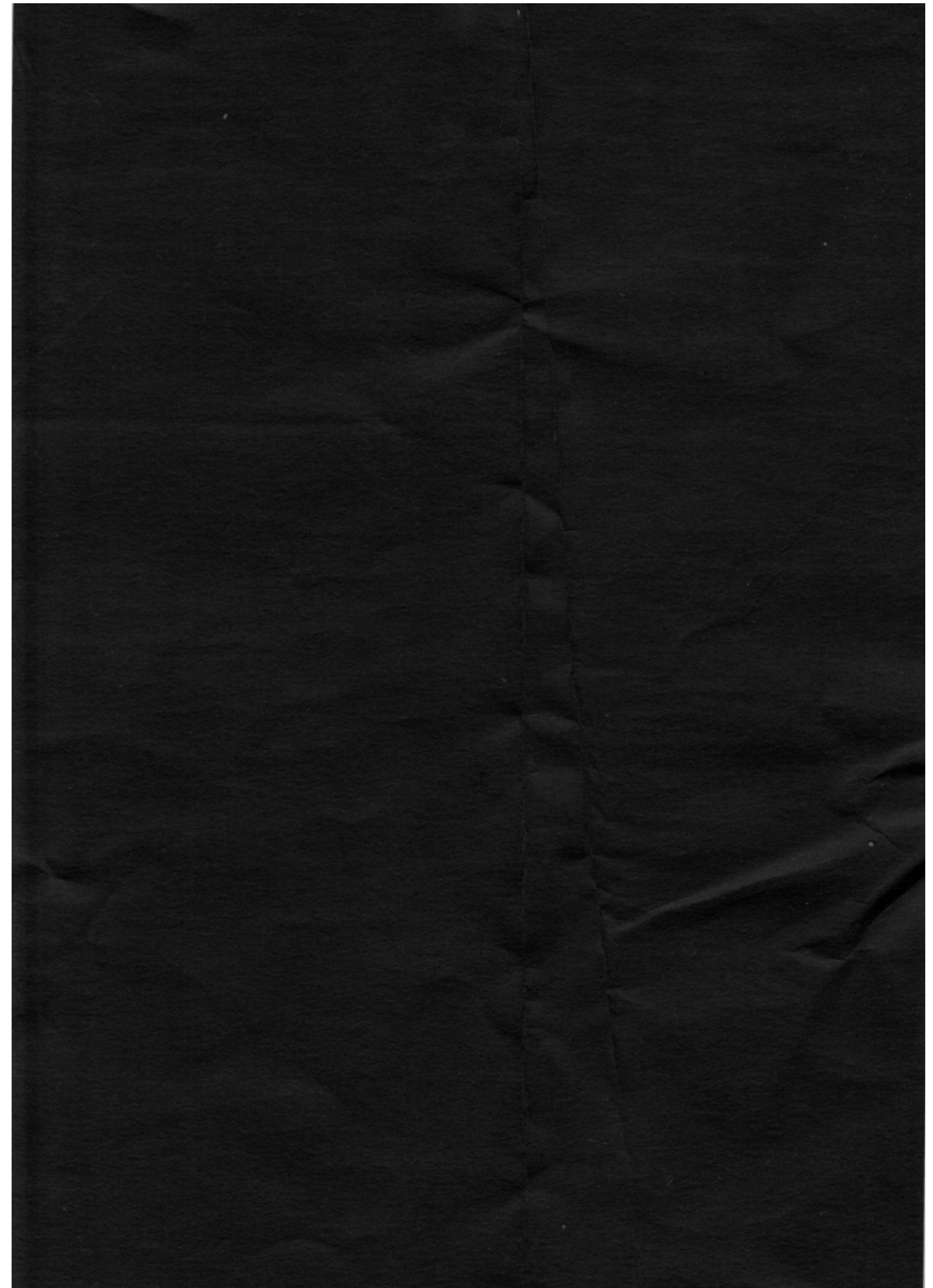
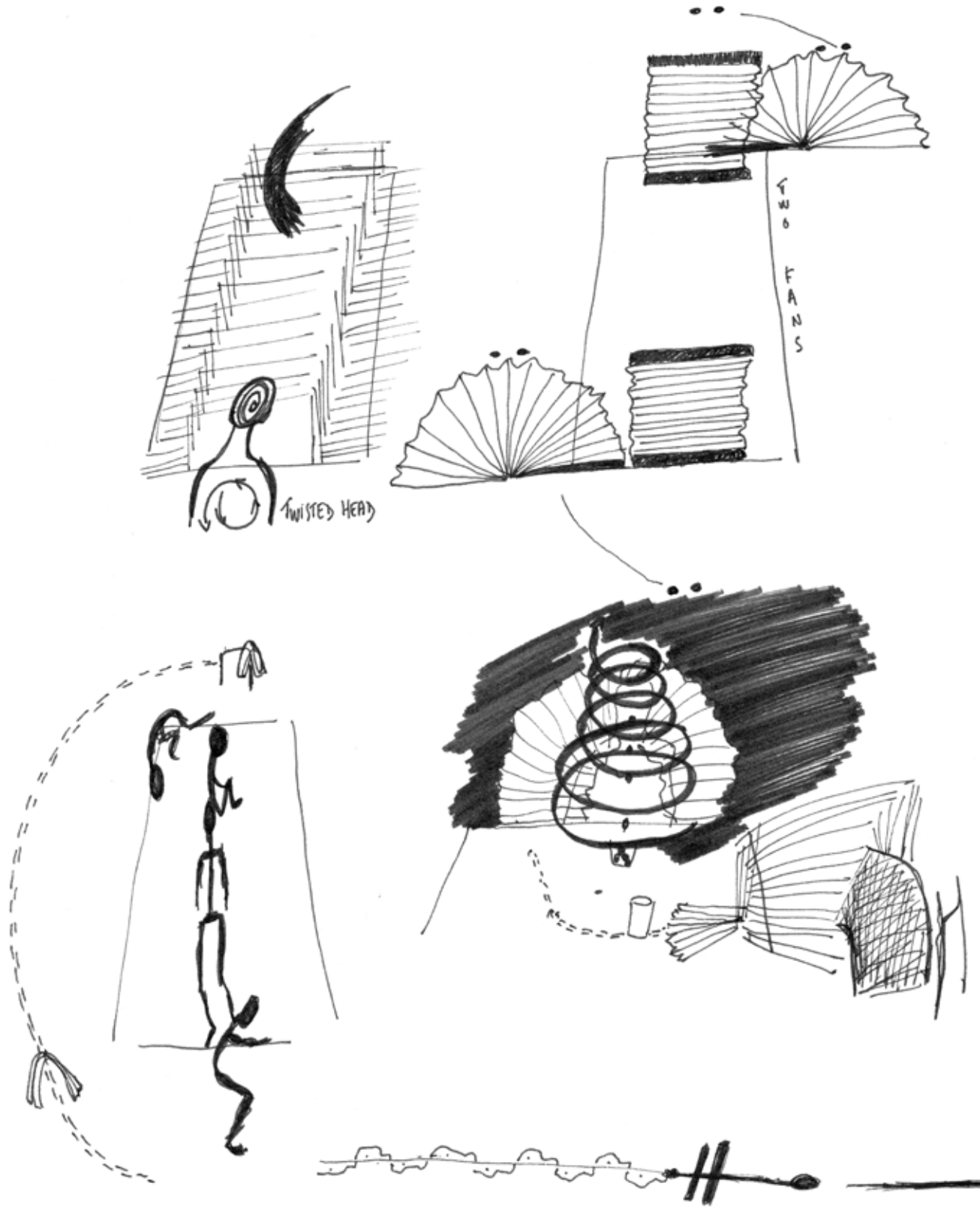


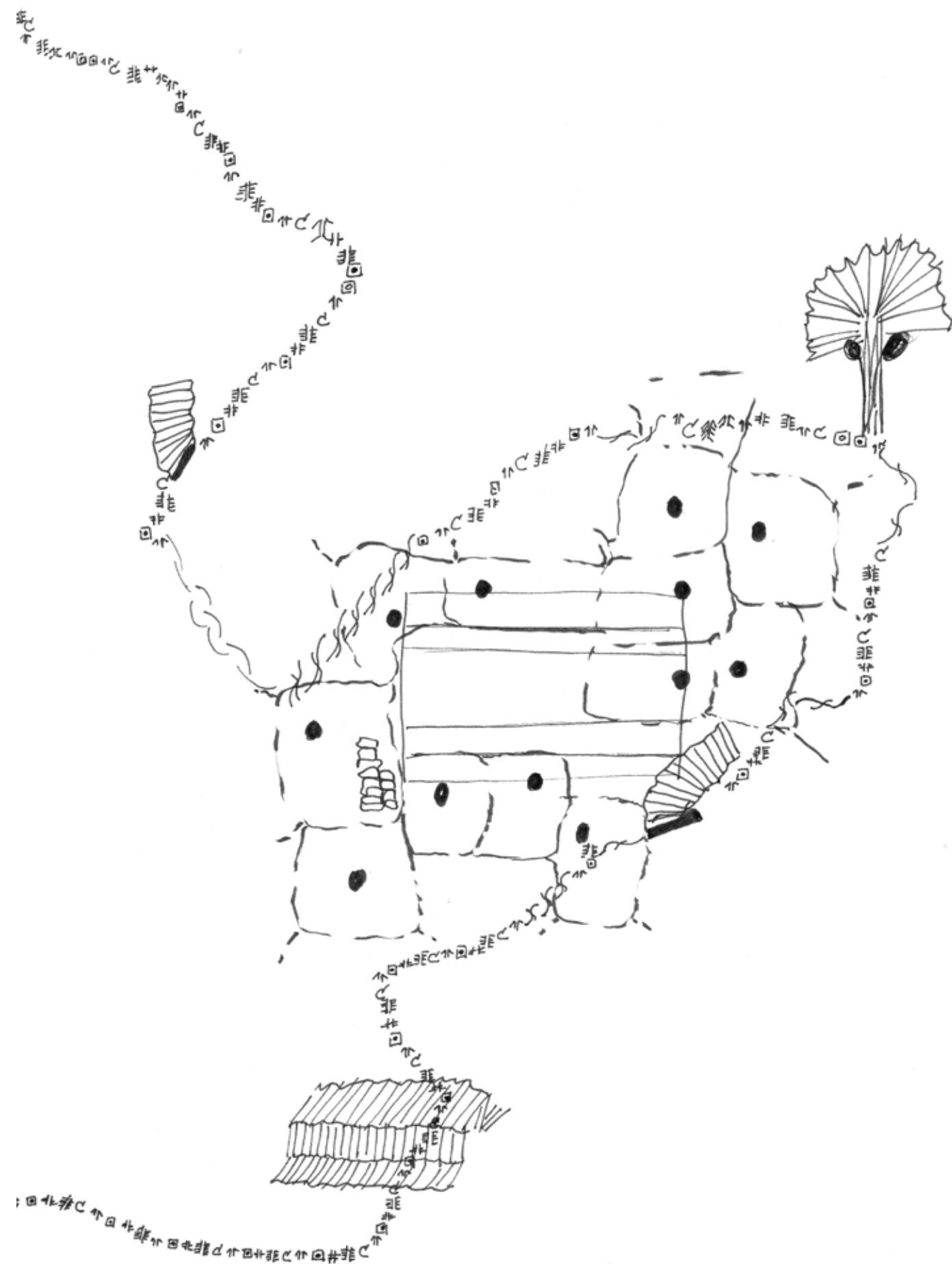
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 we ... jn verleidersmanieren ... enover
 ... koninklijke aanhangsel, de nobele
 en onvermoeibare manier waarop het
 eide, de hartelijkheid, de expansiedrift
 zoen gezien. Hij legde hem soms op tafel
 vierp en klopte ermee op de tafel alsof hij
 taalde hem op een heel gewone manier te
 ... zijn jas uittrekt wanneer hij het warm
 ... dat zijn lid zich daarbinnen niet op zijn
 de en dat hij frisse lucht nodig had en

 zelden over aan haar gewoonte een blik te
 en van mannen. Wanneer er een man uit een
 knoop vastmakend, had ze soms het geluk
 ngen van een gulden lid of een donkerbruin,
 wat haar voorkuist. Op de ho slevards
 loond met het schid. ... van ... slordig
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 uur van een huis, met zijn l ... zend in
 atste zilve tuk was.
 at het Mam ... ak ... eere
 ... ten in

PEELS OFF ITS FEATHERS









Chapter 5. TIME AND TIME AGAIN

One of my movement practices consists in coordinating breathing with directional attentions. I bring my attention downward as I inhale and upward as I exhale. I follow the directions of my diaphragm, which goes down and flattens itself in the inhalation, rises and returns to its place in the exhalation. I suspend time in the moments between inhales and exhales and I let my attention wander. This practice can be a practice of attention with minimal movement, or it can take much larger amplitude with my whole body visibly engaged in folding and unfolding.

Chapter one ‘A retreat into silence’ and chapter three ‘Where images surface’ proposed us discursive journeys through the topics of (1) audience, (2) reading, (3) documentation. Though detailed contents differed from the first to the third chapter, the overall structure repeated and I discussed the three topics in the same order. In this fifth chapter ‘Time and time again’, we will breathe with these topics again but upside down. I reorganize the tripartite structure to move through (1) documentation, (2) reading, (3) audience.

5.1. Documentation: time

THE CONDITIONAL?

Documentation. Reading. Audience. If there is some co-belonging and co-determination in the relation between documentation and its beholder, if they meet 'halfway' (see '3.2. Reading: looking and touching'), it might be worth not only asking how is the reader reading, but also how might documentation be reading? How is the document documenting? And might the reader be documenting? When I am a participant of Anouk Llaurens' practice *The breathing archive* (2016), how does the archive actually breathe? The archive takes a few breaths in contact with its peculiar archivists who breathe, crumple, unfold, and read silently or out loud. This doesn't mean that the archive isn't alive in the absence of its archivists. Perhaps it is inert, but it is in this inertia that the waiting (in French *l'attente*) takes place and operates. This waiting of the document gives time, it labours time, it accumulates times.

Time in documentation is a confusion or a fusion of times. Past, present, and future seem simplistic as temporal terms to the eyes of documentation. What words may I use to talk about the time in documentation? I *could* try to speak of the past of the future, to speak of a past that defines itself as past in relation to a future time, a future reading, a displacement, an opening. I *could* try to speak of a future in the past, that future which is anticipated in the document. Where is the present in all my attempts? It seems to me that the present of the document is a thickness, layers, the document having a body or not, being material or not. It seems to me that the present moment of the document *would* be a thickness or a layering of time. It *would* be an attention pointing toward many times, the other times, the times of emergence, the times of the waiting, the times of change.

In this written reflection about time in documentation, I see one verbal tense appearing in the lines: the conditional (the *woulds* and the *coulds*). In French, verbal tense translates as the word time; time is the word for tense. I see the conditional time appear in my writing and my thinking about time in documentation. The time in condition, a time which is being with and which determines itself *with*. Would the conditional be the time of documentation read in performance? It appears paradoxical considering my proposal to think this documentation in performance as *free* (see '1.3. Documentation: non-representational' and '3.3. Documentation: a book to do and to undo'). On the contrary, the conditional time would be a necessary addition to my definition of *free* documentation, and a reminder that there is no such thing as absolute freedom. The word *free* in *free* documentation refers to an emancipation from the expectations usually connected to documentation like a fidelity to an origin and a path toward reproduction. The *free* does not designate an absence of linkages; this is why the use of the conditional tense makes sense in relation to *free* documentation. Conditional time presents the conditions for *free* documentation to perform (through presence or absence). There is the condition of the present of the performance, the condition of the kind of space, the ritual time of the performance, the condition of a link to the past and to the future, of simultaneous existences.

The document is patient. It has time. Its time can stretch over a rather long duration. Its time can also contain long duration within an instant. It is thanks to the complex temporality of the document⁸⁸ that this effect of insertion of a long duration within a short time is possible. This effect I am writing about is not to be measured, but is a perception. This perception is part of my thinking that unfolds here under the readers' eyes. This perception of compressed time is for instance my experience of *The breathing archive* (Llaurens 2016) as an instant, the layered time between two eye blinks. The reading time in *The breathing archive* is like the time of a morning dream containing distinct images, a succession of actions, clear attentions, in a compressed time. It feels like a dive in the second, the instant, a dive in the present to better dissect its particles.

88 Auslander talks about the complex temporality of performance documentation: 'the moment at which the photograph is beheld refers to the past and is thus the future anticipated in the past, but it also constitutes an event in the present' (2018:9). The complex temporality of the document is the relativity of time in documentation.

I have suggested that the document performing in *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* (THFAITAS Edvardsen 2010) is a collection of books that have gone into the performers' memories and that are then recited to a spectator reader in a one-on-one format. This document in THFAITAS is a fourth thing⁸⁹ that characterises itself by its absence⁹⁰ (see '3.3. Documentation: a book to do and to undo'); it opened for me as spectator some window of time. The thirtyish minutes of recitation/reading provoked in me some confusion of times. As a spectator who reads by listening, I perceive the breadth of the time spent to learn a book by heart and to allow its displacement and slippage into the kind of space where the performance occurs for two readers. I appreciate the gift of time that happens and that gift guides my attention to the quality of time I spend as a spectator 'reading' this memorized book.

MORE OR LESS THAN LINEAR: JUMPS AND SYNCOPATION

In my attempt to articulate how time moves in *free* documentation, I arrive at the conditional, which in itself is not a satisfactory solution, being somewhat vague and open-ended. On the other hand, I also arrive at an observation of my perception of time as a reader of documentation in performance. What might be more relevant in this (my, our) search is that if there is not one temporality proper to documentation, it might be because of an inadequacy with linear temporality. Time then needs to be – borrowing the words of performance scholar Rebecca Schneider – 'less (or more) than linear' (2011:92).

Auslander describes the temporal complexities of performance documentation. To him, performance documentation is always experienced in the present time of its reader; this present is 'the future anticipated' (2018:17) from the perspective of when the document was made. In this present the reader also encounters the past through the document's 'connection to the past' (Auslander 2018:101). Drawing on performative documentation according to Auslander, *free* documentation

89 I suggest the memorized book in THFAITAS is a fourth thing, like I suggest documentation is a fourth thing in the context of performance. The number does not aim to construct hierarchy, it is more of an enumeration of things gathered: performers (1), audience (2), performance (3), documentation (4).

90 The books learned by heart THFAITAS (Edvardsen 2010) perform in their absence during the live performance. In the moment of reading in performance, the books are in the performers' memories. In other facets of the performance work, through publication, the books return to the page as some performers write the remembered books (Edvardsen Appendix 2017).

(which I propose as performance documentation *in* performance) is composed of the future anticipated (the reader's present), and of a gaze to the past, all within the present time of the performance. In the meantime *free* documentation carries the anticipation of the future because it will land in the hand of readers who are future to the present one.

'The past remains in the present' (Ellis 2005:116). In whatever form it may take, performance documentation calls for an experience of duration. It is an invitation to stay with what there was (the past) while moving on through the present. Documentation in performance, *free* documentation, is in addition to its manifested inclusion of the past, a reminder of the delay, the distance, the deferral inherent in theatrical time. In the moment of performance, *free* documentation exposes the lure and the promise of real time, live, non-syncopated. I do not suggest this revealing cannot take place otherwise, but I wish to point at how *free* documentation is a dramaturgical tool to work with the complexity of time in performance. *Free* documentation enables staying with the problematic promise of the live in performance.

It has been well discussed within the performing arts field that to some, the live depends on the recorded (Auslander 2018),⁹¹ and to others the live is what cannot be recorded (Phelan 1993). Whether live performance is recordable or not, Schneider points at the fact that both Auslander's and Phelan's views seem to agree on the fact that 'the live does not record' (2011:92) and that consequently live performance does not document. However, in light of the shift from documentation *of* performance to documentation *in* and *as* performance, in light of how documentation practices have entered the 'live' moment of performance,⁹² and in light of how the practice of reading documentation enters the moment of performance (reminding ourselves that all reading is also a writing), it appears that the inability of the live to record must be put into question. Documentation in performance is evidence of the capacity for live performance to be a recording device itself. Schneider writes:

91 For Auslander, it is because recording technologies exist that the concept and the word 'live' exist (2018).

92 Ellis gives the example of a 2004 performance including the photographer photographing dancers as part of the performance (2005:101).

To the degree that it remains, but remains differently or in difference, the past performed and made explicit as (live) performance can function as the kind of bodily transmission conventional archivists dread, a counter-memory – almost in the sense of an echo ... We are encouraged to articulate the ways in which performance, less bound to the ocular, “sounds” (or begins again and again, as Stein would have it), differently, via itself as repetition – like a copy or perhaps more like a ritual – like an echo in the ears of a confidence keeper, an audience member, a witness. (Schneider 2011:105)

Like a touch in the hands of a spectator reader, *free* documentation⁹³ and its complex temporality are to me like echoes within live performance. Layers of time generate echoes. Moreover, in the moment of live performance, the document to hold onto is an invitation for our perception as spectators to be ‘less bound to the ocular’⁹⁴ and to include the tactile; like a touch again and again that could carve through its iteration the surface of a wall of stone. *Free* documentation exposes performance as what Schneider names a ‘means of re-appearance and reparticipation’ (2011:101), showing the ‘repetitions that make performance as indiscreet, non-original, relentlessly citational, and remaining’ (2011:102). Documentation in performance embodies the ‘syncopated doubleness – the same *and* something else’ that poet Gertrude Stein finds in theatre (in Schneider 2011:94). Because time in documentation is more or less than linear, it also encourages jumps, syncopation, detour, and gaps, in the moment of performance.

PATIENTLY CLAIMING CHANGE

There is one question I left open in the beginning of this chapter: how might documentation be reading? It is the most dizzying question in the present chapter because it proposes the impossibility of taking the perspective of the documentation itself in performance. In the moment of performance, documentation reads the event of performance, which

93 We have at this point and since the beginning of this thesis accumulated a few characteristics of *free* documentation: *free* documentation is not subordinate to an original event, it is read in performance, it is possibly absent, it is emancipated from having to communicate meaning.

94 Reminding ourselves that *free* documentation might perform in its absence and emancipates from having to communicate meaning, or having to be read at all, see ‘3.3. Documentation: a book to do and to undo.’

includes its viewers, the readers and the ghosts (see chapter zero ‘No one in sight’). While it reads performance, documentation claims its right to disappearance and appearance, its right to perform vanishing tricks and séances. Documentation reading in performance invokes in its reading the dance that has never been danced. Invoking the dance that has never been danced means that documentation in performance destabilizes looking, releases attention, opening up to secret dances in the margins, to what is not being performed, to what is excluded, forgotten, hidden. Documentation reading in performance forces us to think of its hauntology, drawing on Joanne ‘Bob’ Whalley and Lee Miller who – after Derrida – describe hauntology as that which allows ‘a way to step into a dialogue with those things that never were’ (2016:30).

The document is patient. It can wait. It is still happening. Since it is still happening, the document asks to be re-read, re-opened, re-visited, re-placed, re-organized. A document’s availability for recursivity is in tension with performance’s habitually limited timing. And so it asks performance to expand its time, which is anyway not that ephemeral or volatile (if it ever were).

The old claim that performance is that which is ephemeral and volatile and subversive of time no longer applies: time has disappeared in an ever-expanding performance. The praxis, practices, residencies (residing, habitation) qua work, methods, workshops, labs, exchanges of methodologies and knowledge, consultations, lecture performances, research, newsletters, diaries, documentation, archiving, all of those older forms of production and reflection are ways of performing, dispersing, and miniaturising artistic work today, making it more transparent, organised, and useful. This displacement of the process to objects of practice does not stem from the need to demystify the mystery of artistic creation as much as it enables the rationalisation, quantifiability, and monetisation of artistic work. (Pristaš 2019:24)

Documentation in performance, *free* documentation, asks performance to adapt its temporality against volatility and for a succession of

transformations to which documentation contributes. But documentation in performance resists the ever-expanded performance Pristaš talks about. In its opacity, *free* documentation resists the economy denounced by Pristaš because *free* documentation can be useless, because it is emancipated from having to communicate meaning, it can perform in its absence, and it might be inaccessible.⁹⁵ *Free* documentation encourages poetic practices and contributes to reclaim poetic time from the economic appropriation of artistic work. I see an example of such a process of transformation implied by reading in performance in recent development of the work *THFAITAS* (Edvardsen 2010). The performance is ten years old and it has travelled the world for all this time playing the economy of festivals and of theatre programming. It now settles down for the extended duration of five years within the osloBIENNALEN (from 2019 to 2024).⁹⁶ A selection of living books is constantly present, for five years, to be read time and time again. This expansion of time allows the performance to settle in one place, to be repeated again and again over a long period, to be accessed by spectators again and again with eventually a year of time between two iterations. This expansion of time in the instance of *THFAITAS* in Oslo enables an encounter with the work as a poetic time, again and again.

5.2. Re-reading

POETIC TIME: IN WAVES

Let me repeat myself briefly. I have just suggested that the document in performance can instigate shifts in the temporality of performance at large, further altering the already tired vision of the ephemerality of performance (Auslander 2018). These shifts, rather than inscribing performance deeper in an all-is-performance-continuum, have the power to pull toward other directions reclaiming poetic time for performers

95 *Free* documentation is so amorphous that it is able to take any shape, form or function. Yet, one should not forget *free* documentation relies on conditions (that I began listing a few pages ago: the present of the performance, the kind of space, the ritual time of the performance, the link to the past and to the future, and simultaneous existences).

96 See <https://www.oslobiennalen.no/event/time-has-fallen-asleep-in-the-afternoon-sunshine-et-bibliotek-av-levende-boker/> 'osloBIENNALEN has given *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* the opportunity to take root for an extended period. In the biennial premises at Myntgata, Oslo, a circulating selection of books will be constantly present so that you and I or whoever may drop in can encounter world literature – and perhaps also time itself – in a new way' (Århus 2019:126).

and for audiences emancipated from explaining and from being seen, and emancipated from understanding and from seeing. I opt for the term poetic time here because I build upon Pristaš' observation that 'poetics (as bringing into existence) have been repressed into the background of discourses on art by our care for the spectator (reception)' (Pristaš 2019:30).⁹⁷ Poetic time can be characterized by more than linear time, by jumps, breaks, and caesuras. In addition, I believe that the experience of poetic time encourages one to engage with rhythm through the practice of repetition.

Let me move backward briefly. I have just suggested the document read in performance can instigate shifts in the temporality of performance. I should also share my concern for how the length of a performance may shift the time in documentation by turning it into a one-time-read-only document for instance. When the document might only be encountered once in the moment of performance, is it stripped of its ability to repeat? Documentation's readability – an ability to be read but not bound to the transmission of one meaning (see '1.2. Reading: levelled out into looking and attending') – encourages recursivity, I would argue, even in disappearance. The invitation to read is enough to prompt spectators to engage with the *re-* in performance; *re-* standing for again and again, in waves, for a possible backward turn, for a possible undoing.

Reading in performance, reading whatever material – gone books, dissolving documents, or illuminated manuscripts – adds to the practice of spectatorship a possibility for return, to look back at what one just looked at, to pause, to start again, to begin with the end. It might be challenging to think of perishable documents as invitations to read again. My reasoning is that the act of reading (whether one is able to return to what we read or not) contains an invitation to reread, even if this rereading takes place in memory, in a non-accomplished intention, or in further dissolution of the document. Reading in performance encourages slowness in the moment of performance. Not slowness primarily defined by a contrast from rapidity, but slowness in line with philosopher Michelle Boulous Walker's definition: slowness as the chance to reread.

97 For Pristaš 'poetic projection' is repressed when valorisation is being produced by art institutions rather than artworks (2019:19), 'poetic clarity' is taken over by economic rationalisation (2019:24) the 'poetic function of art' is to create excess of existence (2019:30). The word poetic shows a link with *poiesis*, with the practice.

Rereading, returning time and time again to read anew, we return, similarly to the things in the world anew ... slow reading would not simply mean always reading slowly, but would, rather, involve a preparedness to return time and time again to what we read. (Boulous Walker 2017:xv)

Reading Boulous Walker, artist researcher Emma Cocker states that in slow reading 'unhurriedness emerges as a precondition for being more available, receptive and open to the other, as well as to the experience of ambiguity, strangeness and uncertainty' (2019:np).

THE TIME IT TAKES

Unhurriedness is manifest in processes of creation like learning a book by heart in *THFAITAS* (Edvardsen 2010) where performers are like copyists who walk the path of the book again and again 'carving that path each time, of that word, of that sentence' (Edvardsen Appendix 2017). Availability for the other is an intention of Pons and Reschovsky (MOHA) when they set regular appointments with their audience to research together questions related to *The Roof* (2016); or when in another work entitled *Superroutine* (MOHA 2017) they distribute a card game that the audience reads while attending to the events of the everyday life in an area of Amsterdam West. Pons and Reschovsky state that time is their only tool to engage with audiences: 'what we do is we are out there ... and we will be there the next day and the next day and the next day, so there is time for people to make their own move towards us' (Appendix 2017). Strangeness and uncertainty are experienced when one opens up an archive in order to crumple it and to breathe with it in *The breathing archive* (Llaurens 2016). The practice builds upon and includes the fact that the crumpled archive is read again and again, crumpled again and again. Llaurens' practice cultivates reading as 'an imaginative engagement' rather than a 'need to know,' an 'experimental gesture,' 'an intellectual curiosity,' 'a questioning rather than explanation,' 'a partial account

rather than an exhaustive one' (these qualifiers are in Boulous Walker 2017:33). In the encounter with ambiguity and in my experience of *The breathing archive* reading is not dogmatic but it is a matter of tuning in, a tuning that happens in waves.⁹⁸

The various examples I have observed support my idea that the gesture of reading in performance encourages unhurriedness, availability and ambiguity in performance. These are qualities of processes rather than ends. Through these examples I have observed what Cvejić already noted in her book *Choreographing Problems*: 'performance is better approached as a transformation process rather than as a fleeting act' (2015:25). Performances where reading is put into practice as a dramaturgical tool inscribe themselves in the artists' long-term vision, in waves, at a slow growing pace.

Reading is sometimes measured in quantity of time. In my morning read of newspapers I can select an article based on the reading time it should require. The time it takes for me to read an article I selected this way is rarely the time indicated next to its title. In my first encounter with the performance *THFAITAS*, I sit next to Mari Matre Larsen for us to read together what she memorized from *Answered Prayers* by Truman Capote. The performance takes the time it takes for her to recite all she could remember. The measure is an approximation: the time it takes for something to happen. In my performance work *Papier multiforme*, *Papier comestible* there is a hand dance written down using signs of Labanotation. Time is written down through text and so the time of an action is defined by the time it takes to read particular words and sentences. For example the right index finger reaches out to the little finger for the time it takes to read 'papier fantôme' and the palm of the hand shrinks for the time it takes to read 'papier magique' and so on. The document in performance calls for a reading that might take the time it takes for the reader to read, for an encounter 'halfway' with *free* documentation to occur, for it to speak back. Virginia Woolf wrote in her essay 'How should one read a book?' (1935):

Wait for the dust of reading to settle; for the conflict and the questioning to die down; walk, talk, pull the dead petals from a

98 Llaurens' recent work is entitled *The wave* (2019). It is a practice of poetic documentation happening over three phases in three days. Each day starts with a silent reading of the score, a written guidance informing the participants in the practice. The three

phases are named 'The gathering' 'The forming' and 'The dissolution.' All titles in this work suggest recursivity and evoke the larger movement and time in which it inscribes itself. I attended the work on 28, 29 and 30 October 2019 at KASK in Gent.

rose, or fall asleep. Then suddenly without our willing it, for it is thus that Nature undertakes these transitions, the book will return, but differently. (Woolf 1935:np)

Spectators readers tune to the time of their encounter with *free* documentation, to better participate in a larger composition of times, to better listen to superimposed times under the roof of theatre, to prepare themselves for porosity with the world.

5.3. Audience: at the same time

SOLITARY AND COLLECTIVE AT THE SAME TIME

The quality of participation at stake in situations of reading in performance composes with simultaneity at its core. The spectator is at the same time a reader. In the moment of performance spectators are pushed through the performance by the wind of time while at the same time they may swim against the flow, able to look back, to turn and return. In this moment, time is elastic. It stretches between the two activities of reading and of attending. In a physiological approach to reading, writer Georges Perec asserts that recreational reading 'will always be accompanied by some other activity' (1985, 2006:181). He continues:

Reading isn't merely to read a text, to decipher signs, to survey lines, to explore pages, to traverse a meaning; it isn't merely the abstract communion between author and reader, the mystical marriage between the Idea and the Ear. It is, at the same time,

the noise of the Métro, or the swaying of a railway compartment, or the heat of the sun on a beach and the shouts of the children playing a little way off, or the sensation of hot water in the bath, or the waiting for sleep... (Perec 1985, 2006:181)

Or the feel of the chair and the movements of the performers over there, or the amount of space above our heads, or the sounds of other spectators turning the pages, or the noise of people eating a book, or the feel of papers in my hands, or the touch of lights on a stage and the vibrations of paper waving aloud,⁹⁹ or a master of ceremonies 'banging away on an organ, making music that blended the churchy and the horror-movie-ish' (Isherwood 2013 online),¹⁰⁰ or the murmur of readers reciting memorized books, or the perspective of monumental stairways going up and down and the sound of heels clicking on them, or the smell of an old library and the view through the window on a street of Amsterdam,¹⁰¹ or 'the sound of a hundred or so people flicking the pages' (Peeters 2019:29),¹⁰² or 'a man with a straight long dress with square holes reciting a letter addressed to the council for ghosts and spirits' (T' Jonck 2019:np), or two performers dancing a duet twice, or other audience members looking at the performance and reading, or the visual tactility of leather.¹⁰³ Reading in performance isn't merely to read a *free* document. It is, at the same time, the darkness that surrounds it, a real obscurity inside the theatre space. In this darkness live the ghosts.

In considering the juxtaposition of reading with other activities, Perec is interested in the excess, in what overflows. He seeks to see what infuses. When one reads and eats, is the taste of words or the taste of bread changed (Perec 1985, 2006:181-182)? When one reads and falls asleep, is the proximity between one's reading and one's dream strengthened? When one reads in performance, is the animation of the document augmented, is its liveness other than it was? Does the performance and all that composes it (living and non-living elements) tip over to the realm of documentation? How am I then implicated when I am a spectator and a reader of this documentation in performance?

99 For this first part of the list, I draw on my reading experience in the performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018).

100 The second part of the list draws on the example of the performance of *Life and Times, episode 5*, by The Nature Theatre of Oklahoma (2013).

101 The third part of the list draws on the performance *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* (Edvardsen 2010) that I experienced in different

places, the Galerie Ravenstein in Brussels, the Stedelijk Museum and the Pintohuis in Amsterdam.

102 The fourth part of the list refers to Peeters' experience of the performance *every now and then* (Edvardsen 2009).

103 The last part of the list draws on the performance *Chesterfield* by Alix Eynaudi (2017) and the review written by Pieter T' Jonck (2019).

Between the solitary act of reading and the collective environment of the performance, the quality of participation or the kind of spectatorship of readers in performance is rather counter-intuitive. Participation (or spectatorial activity) occurs in a rather counter-intuitive way because readers in performance are incited to look away from the performance on stage. It is not about the dancer or the dance being interpreted,¹⁰⁴ but it is about reading together and in so doing practicing attention. From this practice, theatre once understood as a place for people to look at other people,¹⁰⁵ can be seen as a place to rehearse attention without neglecting the differences between the activities of performing and of attending. From this practice of attention, performance once turning away from the text and turning towards the audience¹⁰⁶ can both leave the audience alone and let the text be again. The role of reading in this practice of attention happening under the roof of theatre is given as an aesthetic activity where *free* documentation offers itself to be used and exploited. Through *free* documentation readers practice the inhabiting of non-linear time. Borrowing again Bala's words,¹⁰⁷ readers in performance join in a 'delicate gesture of participation' (Bala 2018:115) where the counter-intuitive quality of participation incites one to 'reflect on the terms of one's participation' (Bala 2018:133) and where there is 'no clarity of message ... but ambiguity and permeability between private and public, between individual and collective experience' (Bala 2018:133).

Perec writes 'there is something a little surprising about the idea of several people reading the same thing at the same time' (1985, 2006:180), however he doesn't really go on to tell his reader why. In performance, spectators read the same thing at the same time *and* in the same space. Solitary and collective activities take place at the same time and in the same space. This juxtaposition in this specific temporality within a restricted space is a condition of the practice of attention in reading in performance. Practicing this juxtaposition is particularly needed and relevant in the context of the contemporary crisis of attention (see '1.2. Reading: levelled out into looking and attending') where attention is essentially approached as an individual matter despite the collective dynamics involved in its construction (Citton 2017).

104 In a recent interview to *The Guardian* choreographer Jennifer Lacey tells how consternated she was of her dancer's body to be 'read constantly' and how her work now 'contrasts with most dance, where the audience are deciphering the performers' moves' (Lacey in Wiegand 2019:np).

105 From reading statements by Peter Brook and by Tim Etchells, Cvejić concludes that a modernist definition of theatre performance says 'the copresence of a human actor performing and a human spectator attending this act of performance is both the

necessary and sufficient condition of theatre' (2015:23). Her study through seven performances then demonstrates a process of disentanglement of performing and attending in performances of expanded choreography.

106 See Lehmann 2005:5.

107 *The gestures of participatory art* (Bala 2018) is a broad investigation of participation including community theatre, immersive performance, and visual arts. Bala's key question asks how do spectators participate beyond the predetermined options allocated to them?

To connect individualist and collective phenomenon of attention, philosopher Yves Citton develops the concept of joint-attention, and discusses situations 'where I know that I am not alone in the place in which I find myself, and where my consciousness of the attention of others affects the orientation of my own attention' (2017:83). In his plea for the consideration of collective attention in the construction of individual attention, Citton writes:

The tools of the macroeconomy of attentional capitalism must be swapped for the more refined tools of a microeconomy of joint attention, which we also encounter in the enclosed space of a live performance. The co-construction of subjectivities and intellectual proficiency requires the co-presence of attentive bodies sharing the same space over the course of infinitesimal but decisive cognitive and emotional harmonizations. We find here the foundation of a particular quality of attention rooted in *care* – which is to say, the attentive consideration of the vulnerability of the other, of our solidarity and our responsibility towards them. (Citton 2017:18 *original emphasis*)

In the enclosed space of a live performance where reading takes place, the practice of attention occurs in a multidirectional way. For example, perceptions follow the paths of looking in one direction while listening in another, and sensing the tactility of one's back. Inherently multiple perceptions and times are cultivated and perform together at the same time in complex streams. The rehearsal of this simultaneity is key to better sense the interrelation of attention and one's implication in the worlds of others (see chapter two 'Holding nothing together').

IMPLICATEDNESS

I first wrote the name ‘implicated spectator’ in the ‘Kit for reading choreography,’ designed together with Jamillah Sungkar, for spectators of the performance *Twists in the body of the big spectator* (2012). Spectators were choosing to become implicated or very implicated. I was curious of the degree of implicatedness depending of the amount of time spectators and participants in the performance were spending with its materials. I since abandoned this quest for quantities of implicatedness in favour of researching the how of implicatedness. My focus on reading in performance for the past years falls in this curiosity for the quality of participation of spectators who read.¹⁰⁸ My first intuitive use of the word ‘implicated’ directed me to other resources. For instance Cvejić uses this same word. Studying the works of French choreographers Boris Charmatz *héatre-élévision* (2002) and Xavier LeRoy *Untitled* (2005), Cvejić observes ‘an attitude of indifference toward the spectators; hence no call for participation is made. Rather than making them participate, the two performances implicate them’ (Cvejić 2015:221). Implication is defined in contrast to solicited participation, with a wish to draw spectators into ‘slowness and darkness’ and the hope to find resonances and echoes (Cvejić 2015:222).

While they don’t demand that attenders become actors, they also don’t allow them to just observe. The function of the spectator as witness shifts to that of accomplice: the involvement of an implicated attender assumes the quality of complicity, bearing some, but not all, responsibility for the very act of perception, which in turn effects a direct sensorial consequence of the event. The somewhat criminal connotation of the notion of being implicated – as in being involved in a crime – points to the problem that the performances ‘give’ to their attender(s) ... The problem she has to solve is to account for her activity and position in this particular situation, and not in the world outside of it. (Cvejić 2015:222)

I recognize much of my experience of implication in Cvejić’s words and I embrace the approach of implicatedness, which relates to engaging with problems and questions, placing choreographic performance as that which poses problems to its attenders. Reflections about the practice of reading already nurtured for a long time the reader’s quality of complicity. Woolf’s advice to readers in 1935 was for instance: ‘do not dictate to your author; try to become him. Be his fellow-worker and accomplice’ (1935:np). The guilt of the reader has been discussed for example by philosopher Louis Althusser, who writes: ‘as there is no such thing as innocent reading, we must say what reading we are guilty of’ (Althusser in Boulous Walker 2017:xii).

Responsible for their own perceptions and engaged with problems, implicated spectators who are also readers are moreover confronted by the multi directionality of attention and by polyphony. The shared labour involved in processes of perception is highlighted in events of reading in performance. In this sense, the term implicated is more appropriate to address the activity of spectators readers than the term spectator alone, or than the words ‘seer’ (Bleeker 2018:18), or ‘attender’ (Cvejić 2015:70). Performance scholar Konstantina Georgelou writes about these names, ‘seer’ and ‘attender:’ ‘while both terms argue for the embodied and perceptive experience of spectatorship they do not explicitly address the (shared) labour involved in processes of perceiving and dislocating attention’ (2019:94). Implicated spectators who read in performance critically rehearse, practice, and experience attention as being part of processes of transformation of performance itself. Responsibility for the attention and perception of others must be taken into account.

¹⁰⁸ In this paragraph I refer to the time that preceded my PhD research. From 2010 to 2012, I undertook research within the Master in Choreography of ArtEZ in the Netherlands, and I began writing about the implicated spectator (see Gallier 2012). This name and idea emerged from the practice of the performance *Twists in the body of the big spectator* (2012a).

Chapter 6. IMPLICATED

Read. Move. Implicated. is a lecture I gave five times in 2015 and 2016, before and during the initial months of my practice-as-research PhD. Through this lecture, I was disseminating the work and ideas that I had developed years before for my Masters research, *The dorsal fin of choreography*, *Writing performs: notation and spectatorship* (Gallier 2012). I also introduced the questions that started my PhD research. This practice has not been central to *Reading in Performance*, *Lire en Spectacle*, rather the practices of the performance *Papier multiforme*, *Papier comestible* concentrated my attention for the years 2015-2020, alongside other performative forms (workshops, artistic publications, phone performances, see chapter four 'Papiers'). Yet, the format of *Read. Move. Implicated.* and the strategies I undertook within this lecture are pertinent here as they communicate key aspects of my approach to artistic research.

6.1. A silent lecture

DOING RESEARCH WHILE PRESENTING IT

‘Read. Move. Implicated.

Silent lecture’

Emilie Gallier (C-DaRE Coventry University, DAS Research Amsterdam) with Astarti Athanasiadou and Fazle Shairmahomed *Read. Move. Implicated.* is a lecture for which no one will ever speak, but only read. This silent lecture proposes to experience the implication that the movement of reading allows. Unified as readers, performers and spectators have the opportunity to be implicated. In other words, they can contribute to the event with a little bit of themselves or more. This lecture-performance advocates the practice of thinking together with spectators, giving importance to every kind of knowledge. In its transfer of codes (playing with academic codes – the research poster – in performative ways) the lecture suggests ways of doing research in the moment of presentation. (Academy of Performing Arts Prague 2016)

Before being presented in Prague for the conference *Artistic Research, Is There Some Method?* on April 2016, the lecture *Read. Move. Implicated.* took place in Utrecht, in Hamburg, and in Coventry.¹⁰⁹ For the lecture’s first occurrence in Utrecht, we (artists Fazle Shairmahomed, Astarti Athanasiadou, and myself) were interested in the participation of the spectator during the lecture and in the movement of reading. In Utrecht, spectators silently read a poster like they would read a newspaper, from their seat, in the conference room. Spectators read the lecture’s content instead of listening to one speaker. Our question was: what happens when reading replaces listening in the transmission of knowledge within a lecture?¹¹⁰ For the lecture’s second occurrence in Hamburg, we implemented a way to incorporate the reading voices of the spectators into the lecture. In the moment of

109 *Read. Move. Implicated.* was performed at five conferences: – February 2015, *Connect! De relatie tussen performer en toeschouwer*, Utrecht, VDO Vereniging voor Dansonderzoek – October 2015, *Practice as Research*, Medical School Hamburg, GTF Gesellschaft für Tanzforschung – March 2016, *Digital Echoes – (re)collecting the past: (re)making*

the future, C-DaRE, Coventry University – April 2016, *Artistic Research, Is There Some Method?* Academy of Performing Arts, Prague – September 2016, *TaPRA*, Bristol.
110 The kind of reading that this question addresses has something collective (like lectures).

the lecture, readers read silently, but prior to the lecture we collected some reading voices that we then assembled in an audio montage and played in the beginning of the lecture. This was our attempt to guide an attention to the multiple internal and silent readings taking place during the lecture. For Coventry, we began observing the contributions of spectators we had collected so far. These contributions were written on Post-it notes. Spectators had completed the sentence ‘My lecture was about... and its title could be...’ With these contributions I made a glossary that would be added to the silent lecture for future readers; the glossary was printed at the back of the large poster. This glossary was my attempt at drawing coordinates of the kind of participation resulting from reading, a kind of participation that I called implicatedness. For future spectators of *Read. Move. Implicated.*, this glossary was a poetic insight initiating the construction of a vocabulary applied to the concept of implicated participation and implicated spectatorship. For my artistic research about reading in performance, this glossary partially presents what is produced by the lecture *Read. Move. Implicated.* It also became reading material for the practice ‘we read and dream’ during the dance workshops I guide. Furthermore, the glossary has been a support for conversations with peers.

For the conference *Artistic Research, Is There Some Method?* in Prague we continued working with questions about the participation of spectators of lectures, and about what happens when reading overtakes listening in the moment of the lecture. In addition, we proposed to acknowledge the lecture as one method for artistic research. The moment of the lecture is a moment of research. This idea of researching while presenting rests upon a vision of artistic research which has a preference for the unknown, the unexpected, things one does not yet know (individually, or on the scale of the team and the research).

In the debate on the epistemology of artistic research, an antithesis repeatedly surfaces: between explicit, manifest knowledge and implicit or tacit knowledge, and between knowing that something is the case and knowing how to do or make something. I propose to add a third side to this: not knowing. ‘I don’t know...’ This is the

more interesting position: not to know, or not to know yet. It creates room for that which is unthought, that which is unexpected: the idea that all things could be different... This is what we may call the radical contingency of artistic research. (Borgdoff 2008:96)

Doing research while presenting it shows trust in the plural knowledge of others. In my position as artistic researcher *being greedy* of this multifaceted knowledge, I am interested in questions asked, I am interested in sharing my research problems in order to collect some help in my endeavour and get to know these problems in more sophisticated ways.¹¹¹ The knowledge I pursue has something of cartography about it. I draw maps, actual or virtual maps. I indicate coordinates for the understanding of my research problems by anyone coming across it and to whom it may serve in one way or another (researcher, student, spectator, friend, collaborator, artists, family member). My vision of knowledge is informed by the position of the Croatian performing arts collective BADco that I encountered on different occasions since 2010. In 2012, BADco published *Post-hoc dramaturgy: reflections on poetics of presentation and circulation in performing arts* (2012:np),¹¹² which articulates a view of knowledge that I align with:

Knowledge is treated as a symptom: not of the disease, but of the specific historical contradictions within a particular field, which are not to be solved by reflecting upon that symptom, but only indicate the coordinates for its understanding. The basic question is how that knowledge is informed and whom it serves, and how. (Kostanic 2012:4)

My approach to seek and indicate coordinates is multi-modal. Whether at the scale of a performance, a lecture, or at the scale of this practice-as-research PhD, I mingle formats and modalities (of writing, of composition, and of reading). The practices I engage with as an artist researcher – lectures, workshops, publications, and performances – are not the result of what Kostanic calls ‘an academization of the performance studies ... theatre losing its influence on other media’

111 Performing arts researcher Joao Da Silva writes: ‘the result one comes to in the end, by means of artistic research, is not a solution to a previously posed problem, but rather a substantially more sophisticated unfolding of the problem posed’ (Da Silva 2013:11).

112 ‘The concept of post-hoc dramaturgy ... condenses all short-circuits and frictions of economic, institutional, cultural, and aesthetical levels of organization and regime in dance and theatre production. It encompasses the temporality of production, the logic of reception, and the logic of creation’ (Kostanic 2012:1).

(2012:4). These practices are the effect of my search for multiple angles to look at problems that I regard as artistic research problems and that have a life in both the art and the research industries.¹¹³ Philosopher Petar Milat continues Cvejić’s theory of the importance of problems in the works of artists of expanded choreography (see ‘5.3. Audience: at the same time’). Milat writes:

A ‘problem’ folds onto itself. Problems are problematic. They are problematic insofar they are problems in communicating, transferring themselves. A problem therefore is always already disguised, given just in a problematic (failing-failed) format. Never pure or simple. Never totally coherent or present. Ironical ... To communicate a problem in the performance (as the performance) will be using a hammer as a saw or a sound box. It will mean to use a dancer as a line of digital code, or a video camera as a decorative plant. Communicating the problem will be mediatizing the medium. (Milat 2011:15-16)

Forms overlap: a live performance, a book one cannot eat, a poem, an edible book of loose pages, a thesis, two lectures, scores, many collages, a laboratory, a workshop, research presentations, silent readings, and conversations.¹¹⁴ These overlapping forms are extensions of one another. A bit like in a dictionary where words are used to define other words, these forms interrelate. In this sense my work belongs to the ‘third economy’ that choreographer researcher Efrosini Protopapa defines as: ‘that of a practice where critical writing and performance-making function as an extension of one another, not only within but also outside the academy’ (2015:np).¹¹⁵

In addition to looking from multiple angles, the different forms of presentation of my research relate to the content of *Reading in Performance, Lire en Spectacle*. Performances, workshops, research presentations and lectures are social sites; they are moments of gathering with others. In these collective moments, the gazes are set in motion by the activity of attending. These collective forms determine a kind of ritual. These forms own particular relational configurations. Participants

113 I discuss here aspects of the relation between my practices and research, and I think back to the chapter one where I invoke Garcia’s view of the relation between nothing and something (see ‘1.3. Documentation: non-representational’).

114 Conversations happen at different levels, from interview-like conversations with artists (that nurtured part one of this thesis), to conversations with peers of

my research group in Amsterdam, to my son telling me for instance ‘why are you making edible books? You then have to make them again and again!’.

115 The ‘third economy’ in Protopapa’s proposition comes after the economies of ‘performance-writing (which relates to a spectator’s point of view and theory of knowledge) and that of performance-making (which relates to the artist’s expertise’ (2015).

share codes and expectations regarding how to take part in an event and how it should unfold. These ritual practices that are lectures usually have some directionality: a movement from one (a researcher, a teacher, a performer) to another (an audience, a student, a spectator).¹¹⁶ In my research, I unfold these forms and contexts to observe how the presence of a document to be read in performance modifies binary relations familiar to these events (from the researcher on one side to the listener on the other side). Might the document in performance initiate, borrowing Donna Haraway's words, a 'break out of binaries' (1991:129)? If the document in performance multiplies relations, my hypothesis is that it may then involve a movement of diffraction (a concept dear to feminist theories).¹¹⁷ In the collective event of performance, the document, a nothing, which is in fact something (see 3.3. Documentation: a book to do and to undo'), regains its thingness in the oldest sense of the term *thing*. In old English, old German and old Frisian, the word *thing* meant 'meeting, assembly, discussion' and later took the sense of the subject that was being discussed, and finally, has come to refer to an object or pretty much anything (Online Etymology Dictionary 2020). If the document in performance multiplies relations and enacts diffraction, it is then an occasion for an assembly to take place, for the meeting of knowledges and for the appearance of the effects of their differences. Collective events are occasions to think and to learn differently from solitary events. Collective events like lectures, performances, research presentations and workshops are occasions to practice documentation's performativity through reading in a collective place.

Returning to my example of *Read. Move. Implicated* (2015), the lecture is a place and time for performance-thinking to unfold: to make direct propositions (in action), to be with spectators as temporary co-researchers. The lecture composes with thinking by doing. This approach is in line with Natasha Lushetich's position (artist, theorist, and educator). In *Interdisciplinary Performance, Reformatting Reality* (2016), she examines the roots of theory and the continuity between theory and practice:

116 I dare calling lectures ritual practices in a spirit of experimentation and in relation to the field of research in anthropology. Yet I am aware of the distance between the lectures as occidental rituals in my research and the rituals studied by anthropologists.

117 My peer and former colleague at the Centre for Dance Research in Coventry, choreographer researcher Teoma Naccarato elaborates on the concept of diffraction drawing on Haraway and Barad. Naccarato writes: 'as a metaphor in research practices diffraction

suggests the continual spilling of voices through and around one another, illuminating the ways in which articulations of knowledge resonate differently in differentiated contexts' (2019:4). She also proposes a metaphor to understand diffraction: 'diffraction refers to interference in the trajectory of waves as they pass through or around obstacles (e.g. waves in the ocean crashing through and around jagged rock formations)' (Naccarato 2019:26).

As American classicist Andrea Wilson Nightingale (2001) explains, *theoria* was a journey to a destination away from one's own city undertaken for the purpose of seeing as an eyewitness certain events and spectacles. *Theoros* was an envoy sent on a mission to gather and exchange information: to witness a religious festival, to represent one Greek city to another, or to broaden the traveller's horizons. Regardless of whether their journey had a predominantly religious, political or personal function, the *theoroi* were required to report back on what they witnessed and experienced. This implies both performance and communication, and does not limit the practice of theorising to a passive reception of static images or their passive contemplation. Thinking in performance is thus simultaneously a communicational method and a way of making direct propositions. Instead of debating the possibility of eating or walking differently, performance substitutes action for debate. It presents a different way of eating or walking. In so doing, it makes the new way of eating or walking a temporary reality, which is to say that it re-structures, re-codes – or re-formats – the existing reality. (Lushetich 2016:6 *original emphasis*)

Read. Move. Implicated. re-formats the existing reality of a lecture. We propose a temporary reality where the lecture is not oral, but is a silent moment of co-presence, where one reads. The usual twenty minutes of paper presentation where one presenter reads, are replaced by twenty minutes of silent reading by spectators. And the usual ten minutes of Q&A where delegates question the presenter, are replaced by a moment of exchange between spectators.

MOVEMENTS OF THOUGHT IN BEGINNINGS

'*Read. Move. Implicated.* is a lecture for which no one will ever speak, but only read.' In December 2015, the organizers of the conference *Artistic Research, Is There Some Method?* read this sentence in my application. Five months later, this same sentence was read out loud and recorded by some conference delegates as a preparation for the lecture. On April ninth, in the live event of the lecture and after five minutes of oral introduction, this same written sentence marks the transition towards a lecture where one would not speak nor listen, but rather read. As the phrase appears as black text on the white screen, spectators and presenters silently read. In the meantime, they hear pre-recorded voices reading along at slightly different rhythms. Inner voices and audible voices overlap as the text continues to unfold on the screen.¹¹⁸ After seven minutes the phrase reiterates, closing the introduction and starting twenty minutes of silent reading. Spectators receive a large folded poster that they can read in their own space, at their own pace, while selecting what to read (the audience was informed that there is too much content on the poster for the amount of reading time).

The repetitive composition that I depict here translates my effort to accumulate beginnings in the lecture *Read. Move. Implicated.* I insist on beginnings in *Read. Move. Implicated.*, and I ask myself: when does a spectator get caught by the landscape of a performance? Is it as the show starts, when lights cover darkness? Is it when spectators encounter online materials about the performance? Is it before the very existence of this performance when a spectator reads the words that, years after, become the title of the performance? There are different beginnings. When presenting *Read. Move. Implicated.* I was interested in the ways expectations grow and already constitute a beginning for a performance. The title *Read. Move. Implicated.* and its subtitle 'a silent lecture' produce for example some expectations and interrogations. For instance Dr. Eline Kieft, research fellow at C-DaRE, asked me before the lecture in 2016 if it would be about silence and if it would involve meditative practices. Such acts of questioning and expecting are movements of thought that traverse the spectator.

Beginnings are moments of suspension, micromovements taking a body off balance, before it dives or jumps. All expectations are still alive in beginnings, unresolved, they form a ground for dreams. Beginnings catch spectators and bring people together in a relational field. The beginning of a performance for a spectator is the moment she is caught in a movement of thought that is, despite appearances, not hers. Philosopher, artist, and dancer Erin Manning writes 'that movement is always in the infinity of a crossroads between a "where" and a "how", but never a "who"' (2015:117). Manning rethinks the concept of thought:

As regards thought, it will be necessary to reorient it to the relational field of the occasion, refraining from delimiting it to predominant notions of intellectuality which tend to place thought squarely within the linguistic limits of intelligibility ... it will also be necessary to undo thought of its dependence on the human subject. (Manning 2016:28)

Thought is a vibrational movement that one touches and gets caught into, pulled into an ecology of relations. 'Where do we go when we think?' asked philosopher Hannah Arendt? (see '2.5. Hosts'). In light of Manning's thinking, the question becomes: where are we taken when we think? Robertson continues Arendt's question and asks where we go when we read (2012:22). Where are we taken when we read? Is the movement of reading the perpetuation of the moment of a beginning? Are readers taken to a field where desires are maintained open, a field favourable to daydreams? This field would be a fertile terrain for readers to get caught by movements of thought: a landscape, a milieu, a force field, a relational movement from which to move within, becoming in Manning's words 'co-constitutive of it' (2015:123); what I see as being implicated.

118 For a screenshot of this text together with overlapped reading voices, see <<https://vimeo.com/190102237>>.

GLOSSARY OF READ. MOVE. IMPLICATED.: ENDS FEEDING OTHER BEGINNINGS

The audience of *Read. Move. Implicated.* first reads from a screen while listening to voices reading along. This text unfolding on the screen is an effort of collective reading where the reading of others is rather accessible, because at that time we read the same thing, the same text at more or less the same time. After this introduction, each spectator opens up a large printed-paper poster. The wave of reading breaks onto the rocks and separates into individual reading ponds.

Imagine a room where about thirty people sit next to each other, unfolding a poster that is larger than the amplitude of their open arms. The poster asks for the involvement of the reader's whole body holding it. At once, the space is remoulded by the readers' gestures of unfolding. Large papers redesign the room in generating volumes and lines moving on their own from inertia. The large papers produce a new soundscape of 'flips' and 'flops' and of crumpling sounds. Readers' hands extend above their shoulders. Their eyes are up. Their pelvises are grounded on their seats unless they opt to read while lying down on their backs or on their stomachs. The space of the poster is superimposed with the space of the lecture; it is a lecture in the lecture. This superposition reminds me of how in written dances of the eighteenth century in France, the space of the page was superimposed with the space of dance. The imaginary superposition of two spaces, the one of the page and the one of the dance, is at the foundation of a scriptural art for dance of which Raoul Auger Feuillet published the principles in Paris in 1700. Choreography in this western tradition of dance is the proposition of an act of reading which is simultaneously a *mise en danse*, a being caught by the dance.

In the silent lecture *Read. Move. Implicated.*, after the concentrated collective reading of the introduction, the twenty minutes of reading the poster begin in a unified and quiet atmosphere. It then evolves into a more differentiated landscape of readers. Some readers do nothing but read quietly. Some are watching others. Sitting on a chair, some readers reflect and question their experience. Some close

their eyes and meditate. Some listen. Some skirt around the periphery. Some readers pair up with their neighbour to read and comment, others walk to the table where objects are available for physical experiments, others begin to fold the poster according to its lines. When the twenty minutes are over, a sound of recorded crumpling paper resembling thunder fills the space. The projection now writes: 'to my neighbour I tell: my lecture was about ... and its title could be ...' Spectators turn to their neighbour articulating promptly the sense they make out of the lecture. They are then given Post-its on which to write. The Post-its are to be glued onto posters that will perform future lectures. The audience of the present prepares clues for spectators of the future. These clues suggest qualities of participation and ways of being implicated.

Here are a few examples of responses written by audience members of *Read. Move. Implicated.* on Post-its:

- My lecture was about folds, me folding into myself performing. And its title could be: Collapsing senses of performance as a whole.
- My lecture was about reflections on readings, thinking, feeling and the act of being looked at. And its title could be: performing spectatorship.
- My lecture was about fragments and assemblage.
- My lecture was about unforeseen appropriations.
- My lecture was about the reading of my neighbours. Title: Redaction of notation.
- My lecture was about admitting that I don't like lectures and then trying to change the form of lecture so that it becomes rewarding.
- Reversed lecture.
- My lecture was about: Should I destroy the poster? Or take it home? And its title could be: a lesson about being greedy.

Out of a collection of fifty-five Post-its, I later grouped their contents according to common words or thematic affinities, letting the words overlap and voices juxtapose. This condensing movement of editing

generated short textual material. Seventeen verbs constitute the glossary of *Read. Move. Implicated*. This glossary was printed on posters of the later versions of the lecture. The glossary suggests that implicated spectators:

Prepare Did this woman have it prepared beforehand?

Admit I admit that I don't like lectures. I change the form so that it becomes rewarding. Pocket lecture.

Appropriate Unforeseen appropriation. I appropriate in tandem with my neighbour, listening to physical impulses. Should I destroy it? Or take it home? Being greedy.

Assemble Fragments and assemblage. Collapsing senses of performance as a whole.

Reverse Conventions of lecture. A reversed lecture.

Fold I fold away the lecture. I fold into myself. I fold errors in delight. I fold meaning. I fold poetry whilst giggling. I fold within the lines. Folds of concentration. I unfold and feel the begrudging urge to fold back up.

Hide Extension, butterfly.

Spectate I am being looked at. I observe. How different are we?

Read What I read is what I get. The reading of dance. The dancing of reading. I redact. I become words on the move.

Hear The sound of folding. The sound of silence is crunching.

Say Do I say too much? The woman behind me has a thing to say. I listen to her sound, I capture words coming from her and from others.

Contemplate I take time. I monitor the passing of time. I wait and give time to others. What does my neighbour read?

Riddle Being riddled. Figuring it out. Mysterious. Just do it anyway.

State The statement cracks the rigidity of the print.

Move My attention focuses on red dots. They move around. Am I moving? We are one body of red dots, a shifting body. I skirt round the periphery. I watch.

Struggle What shall I do? Discomfort playing. Doubtlessly in doubt.

Start I think anew. I trawl thoughts from what is there and then.

Re-think constantly what you are experiencing. Emptiness.

6.2. Hosts levitate

The 'I' cannot be located in advance of the event ... the 'I' is always in the midst, active in the relational field as one of the vectors of the in-act of experience. 'I am' is always, to a large degree, 'was that me?' ... 'where I stand,' similar to the ubiquitous 'object of study,' is too often the question that stops the process, that takes the writing out of the act, that aligns it to disciplinary method and, by extension, to institutional power. We all do this, of course, to a certain degree, but it seems to me that what study can do exceeds the kind of self-situating that too often becomes the death-knell of creative acts of reading (and, of course, of making). Another kind of stand must be taken, one that erupts from the midst, one that engages sympathetically with the unknowable at the heart of difference, one that heeds the uneasiness of an experience that cannot yet be categorized.' (Manning 2016:37-39)

If I am the hostess in this thesis I hope to levitate. I wish to situate myself and in the meantime to allow myself some levitation, absorbed and distant at once. This movement of levitation is a way to blur the situatedness first of all with regards to authorship. I wish to reiterate here what I introduced in chapter zero 'No one in sight.' I want my intention for polyphony to be explicit: I wish to acknowledge the sources I cite, 'conscious' sources; the ones I cannot trace anymore, forgotten; the ones I don't know about, unconscious; the ones readers bring in, the co-written.

Beginnings accumulate. I am a spectator reader and host of the performance *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* (Edvardsen 2010). I am host of the research *Reading in performance*, *Lire en spectacle*. They are hosts in the performance *Papier multiforme*, *Papier comestible* (Gallier, 2018). They are hosts of the book as performance *Papier incommestible* (Gallier, 2020). They are hosts of the research *Reading in performance*, *Lire en spectacle*.⁸² I am host of the research *Reading in performance*, *Lire en spectacle*.

119 Alice Chauchat, Suzan Tunca, Julien Bruneau, David Weber-Krebs, Agnese Cornelio, Edit Kaldor and Sher Doruff formed since the beginning of my research a support group of peers and fellow artist researchers through the structure of THIRD at DAS Graduate School in Amsterdam. They are hosts of my research

for the regular insightful exchanges we had. Moreover, my director of studies Simon Ellis and my supervisors Hetty Blades and Sarah Whatley host this research at each iteration of their readings of my writings, their attending to my practices, and their engagement in conversations about the research.

Accumulated relations take the hostess off the ground. She levitates. Levitation means half-smiles and humour like in the performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* where levitation is performed many times while exposing the magic trick to trigger a sense of absurdity and at the same time a valorisation of the beauty of the hand gestures invoking levitation, the beauty of eyes seeing floating bodies, and of eyes closing. Levitation means playing with distance, moving down to rise up.

Hostess in this thesis, I levitate and look at myself, at my practice, at what I produce. I am observer and observed, observed and observer. There is a loop between observing and being observed, producing and being produced, access and being accessed. The hostess stands – levitates – in the midst. Thanks to this midst it is possible to grant authorship to those who read, guests, ghosts, readers, who contribute to the performance work and who contribute to the research. The performance work and the research can then slide from one body to another, travel beyond predetermined territories (where the author would own knowledge and where the author would own performance).

6.3. Ghosts vibrate

Research-creation does much more than what the funding agencies had in store for it: it generates new forms of experience; it tremulously stages an encounter for disparate practices, giving them a conduit for collective expression; it hesitantly acknowledges that normative modes of inquiry and containment often are incapable of assessing its value; it generates forms of knowledge that are extralinguistic. (Manning 2016:27)

Manning writes that artistic research offers things other than language. In this artistic research *Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle*, the

performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* is a chapter. The performance is a chapter because I find it important to demonstrate, in action, that performance differs from research even though it is one of its facets. *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* is an event of reading in performance; it is poetic time, time that stands out of the continuum where everything is research.

Like I stated in chapter zero: for many readers of *Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle*, the performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* is a ghost. Likewise, the phone performance *Papier telephone* performs intangibly here. These performances are vibrations in this thesis, something other that allows us to revisit what knowledge can be. Like the edible book in *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* performances in this research were destined for dissolution. They stand on the other side and materialize disappearance. Their withdrawal let something else appear through processes of digestion, transformation, composting.¹²⁰ The characters, choices of words, imprints, some arrangements and numerous unknown readings are examples of what emerge from performances playing the vanishing trick. Resisting the temptation of containing what once was means embracing transformative processes and cultivate diversity, leaving space for multiplicities of heterogeneous pieces, heterogeneous readings: solitudes inside a collective body. Knowledge generation is proposed as a process of clues and coordinates provided for multiple investigative readings.



XXVII

120 Choreographer Siobhan Davies talks about her past work as compost and developed this idea in a conversation with her peer Jonathan Burrows during the event 'C-DaRE Invites... Online - Siobhan Davies and Jonathan Burrows in Conversation' on July 22nd 2020.

6.4. Readers resonate

The resonator echoes a sound, or a part of it, because it is able, thanks to its material, to reverberate, store, and transfer certain sound waves from the neighbouring sound source. (Cvejić 2015:222)

In this chapter, I turned to a moment and to a practice that I associate with a kind of beginning: *Read. Move. Implicated.* is one of the beginnings of the practice-as-research *Reading in Performance, Lire on spectacle*. My approach with the silent lecture was to practice research while presenting it. My intention with the end of *Read. Move. Implicated.* – when spectators give a title to their lectures – could be misunderstood as seeking spectators’ interpretations. Beyond the question of how spectators interpreted the lecture, my intention was to listen to the resonances coming from spectators. I treated the collected titles as poetic matter that would not explain nor reveal much about the experience of the audience. In line with my decision not to measure participation or spectatorship, I believe that the matter given by the audience is not a representation of their experience. I do not interpret the texts collected for *Read. Move. Implicated.*, but I compose with them. This poetic matter became the substance for speculation about implicated spectatorship and reading in performance. Ends became other beginnings. On the page, in the glossary, the verb ‘appropriate’ was placed next to the adjective ‘greedy.’ This juxtaposition led to seeing images surfacing: mouths eating paper, and hands holding, pulling, grabbing.¹²¹ Before I knew it, reading in performance became eating in performance and the book performing in *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* has since then been edible. This is one way of telling the story of how books became edible in the performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible*. Yet I doubt about this causal explanation, and I sense that this process of transformation (of the materiality of the book) is more complex, growing from a ground of interrelated resonances.

¹²¹ During one of my studio practices and workshops with peers (dancers, choreographers, researchers), I was reading the glossary one verb at a time. Closing my eyes I paid attention to images surfacing after reading. Practicing this with others influenced the type of images that would infuse either the performance work (*Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* 2018) or this thesis.

In chapter five at ‘5.1. Documentation: time,’ I suggested that linear temporality is inadequate to describe time in documentation. The temporal complexities of performance documentation read in performance, affects the quality of participation generated by reading in performance. I propose to think that readers in performance are implicated by being caught within this complex temporality. Readers reading in performance are implicated in the non-original, citational, and the remaining of performance. Readers resonate. While Cvejić talks about resonance in performance as a prolongation beyond the time of the performance (2015:24), I see the phenomenon of resonance as occurring in all temporal directions. Readers resonate in all directions.

Doing research while presenting it, is the process I found the most appropriate to tune to the waves of readers’ resonances. All public moments since the beginning of this practice-as-research were occasions to think in performance at the same time and in the same space as others. Reminding myself of the problem of binding (that I introduced in ‘0.8. Fifteen graphic pages, eight chapters, and image crumbs’) and of its possible mislead towards linear readings, I observed that my practice of doing research while presenting it is also a way to turn each presentation as chance to unbind, shuffle pages, rename, and restart. Each presentation is a disappearance letting something else enter (like described in the previous point). This dance of disappearance and appearance resembles the score by Loïc Touzé ‘empreinter une danse’ (see ‘2.6. Ghosts’ and ‘2.7. Implicated’). Touzé’s score disappropriates the dance from the dancer’s body; it is thus the dance that accesses bodies. Dancers and spectators are its hosts. In my approach to practice-as-research, knowledge access us researchers and readers.

A reader dissolves ‘Papier comestible.’ This reader is an alchemist. He dissolves the book. He eats the book. She regurgitates the book.¹²²

¹²² This short text is a mix of scenes in the performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (2018).

Chapter 7. NO INTENTION OF GOING AWAY

‘No intention of going away’ is this thesis’ epilogue. I recapitulate the characters’ positions and actions in an enmeshment between their life in the performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* (2018) and their life in this thesis. I then indicate coordinates that did not find other places in this thesis: I confront my reflection on reading in performance to two encounters. There is the encounter with my son who does not ‘know’ how to read and yet who reads the edible book ‘Papier comestible.’ There is the encounter with a spectator of dance who, born blind, builds his practice of spectatorship in close relation with others.

It came seventeen years ago – and to this day
It has shown no intention of going away.
Edward Gorey, *The Doubtful Guest*, 1957

The guests perform the levitation trick. The host does not present much of a conclusion. What matters are the thoughts, images, and perceptions that went through readers. The writer withdrew and joined a group of ghosts. Some ghosts became guests. The magician was a host. The host was a magician. Readers were magicians too. The dance that has never been danced has been eaten and gone. The dance that has never been danced entered the readers.

These characters introduced in the beginning of this thesis (chapter zero ‘No one in sight’) became etiquettes that make spaces. These spaces interconnect. For example, when the dance that has never been danced enters the readers, two spaces overlap. Besides, being eaten, the dance that has never been danced claims its right to be unavailable, a right to be dissolved and to disappear. The dance that has never been danced is a magician whose ‘audience has been lured by the promise of magic.’¹²³ This magician plays the illusion of access, only to better access the audience and to perform the vanishing trick. Three, two, one, gone.

It would carry off objects of which it grew fond,
And protect them by dropping them into the pond.
Edward Gorey, *The Doubtful Guest*, 1957

I suggest throughout this thesis that the audience who reads in the real time of performance encounters the dance that has never been danced. I also associate this dance that has never been danced with *free* documentation. Reading in performance, spectators encounter *free* documentation. If I now follow the logic of the above text where I say characters are spaces, *free* documents – the character of ‘the dance that has never been danced’ – is a space. These spaces might be hidden ‘into the pond,’ closed, locked, or unavailable. For example, in the performance *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* (Edvardsen 2010), *free* documents manifest in the form of books that have gone into the performer’s memory; spectators and performers read side by side in the moment of performance. In other instances, *free* documents as spaces are slightly open. In Llaurens’ practices (*The breathing archive* 2016 and *The wave* 2019), *free* documentation is shifty. Crumpled pages in tote bags (*The breathing archive* 2016) and borrowed stones (*The wave* 2019) contribute to form a kind of space in which to practice the act of documenting. Entering this space, participants read, borrow, select, remember, and return. In the example of *Papier multiforme*, *Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018), *free* documentation materializes in an edible book whose form invites

¹²³ This sentence is pronounced by performer Nina Boas in the performance *Papier multiforme*, *Papier comestible* (Gallier 2018).

for a reading practice that welcomes dissolution. *Free* documentation welcomes inefficiency, unavailability and impermanence. These characteristics are not in opposition to a possible materiality; on the contrary they make of *free* documentation a ghostly presence that has ‘no intention of going away’ and that can materialize in as many forms as performance affords.

One day my son asked me: ‘mum, why am I not allowed to eat your books?’ One day I asked him: ‘would you like to read my edible book?’ He read, one page at a time.¹²⁴

*Il n’y a rien
Juste des lettres
C’est un petit papier que tu peux plier
Une page avec des lettres mais alors elle est un peu déchirée*

There is nothing
Only letters
It is a little paper that you can fold
A page with letters but it is a little bit torn

Events of reading in performance communicate problems. I stated in chapter five (at ‘5.1. Documentation: time’) that *free* documentation invokes the problem of the live in performance. Moreover, events of reading in performance challenge known ways of reading. It was not difficult for me to imagine *free* documents in the hands of a reader who, like my six-year-old son, does not know how to read – because *free* documentation challenges how one thinks one knows how to read.

In this thesis, I research the act of reading in performance in relation to the ocular practice of looking, to immanent and expanded attention, to breathing, to eating, to imagining, and to cultivating a tactile gaze. My interest in a tactile way of reading led me to contact Anthony Penaud for a phone conversation.¹²⁵ Penaud was born blind and engages in organizations that support accessibility for disabled people to culture, sports, and education. He described to me his practice as a spectator of dance performances. His spectatorship is organised around

¹²⁴ There were many moments in my PhD trajectory in which my (now) six-year-old son Samuel Prod’homme Gallier showed curiosity for the edible book I was crafting in our house. I, in turn, was also curious about how he would read this book that carries text, images, notations, and scores. In March 2020, before a performance of *Papier multiforme*, *Papier comestible* in Amsterdam, my collaborators Camille Gerbeau (performer) and Margarida Guia (poet and sound artist) were at our home. My son read the edible book to us, for seventeen minutes, one page at a time. Margarida Guia recorded him and I translated it.

¹²⁵ At the occasion of *Fieldings* (edited by Sher Doruff) – that presents the practices and research within the program THIRD of which I was a fellow from 2016 to 2019 – I was invited to ask a question to someone who does not work in my field and whose answer could open new directions for my research. I asked Anthony Penaud, born blind, to describe his practice as a spectator in dance performances.

listening to audio-description. Prior to attending the performance, he joins a workshop with the audio-describer. Together with her and other spectators they move, they touch, and they speak: they define a glossary of words through kinetic experiences. In the moment of performance, he puts on his headphones and hears the voice of the audio-describer. Her words are also his words. He tells me that these words mobilize his kinetic experiences and his imagination. Unlike in theatre performances at which he prefers the audio-describer to remain neutral, Penaud finds that this preparation and this relation with the audio-describer are essential to his experience of dance performances that he describes as poetic. He says that his concentration in dance performances is loose and diffuse and that in that environment he ‘fabricates’ images (Penaud in Doruff et. al 2021:176). My conversation with Penaud started an interest and a line of thought, a thread I might further pull in another space and at another time.¹²⁶

Let me return to the overlap of spaces in events of reading in performance. Readers overlap with the dance that has never been danced (*free* documentation), and overlap with hosts. In this context, to read is to move between imbricate spaces. To read is to wander through spaces. To read *free* documents in performance is to levitate between spaces. The weight of the body lightens up and prepares the spectator reader for a mixed attention: from absorption to distance, engaging attention with inattention, calling for attention and for what it leaves on the other side.

Reading in performance, one rehearses a reading and a looking practice with an attention to simultaneities, the things and nothings that happen in the same place and at the same time. Spectator-readers and performer-readers train to see many sides at once, to see a dance within a dance (read a dance while attending a dance). Seeing gestures within gestures, readers in performance train to see differences (like when subtitles describe something other than what one hears). Readers see the interstices. Like the magician, readers doubt. When he reads ‘Papier comestible,’ my son is undecided; he sees possibilities (he says ‘it could be this or that’), and he sees a character ‘in two’ (which one could interpret as being split into two sides of the same character):

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¹²⁶ I imagine pulling this possible thread for research and observe the work of audio-description as a performance in the performance.

*Un rond
Un rond mais alors dans le noir
Des petites formes comme des
Un cinq, un ‘e’, un ‘l’ et ça
Ça peut être un ‘c’, un ‘e’
Et un ‘i’, un pantalon
C’est tout noir comme le ciel
Ou la mer, ou la nuit
Le moyen, comme ça ou comme ça ?
Quelqu’un mais alors il est en deux
Quelqu’un mais alors il est en deux*

A circle
A circle but then in the dark
Small shapes like
A five, an ‘e’, an ‘i’ and this
This can be a ‘c’, an ‘e’
And an ‘i’, trousers
It’s pitch dark like the sky
Or the sea, or the night
The middle, like this or like that?
Someone but then in two
Someone but then in two

The sea, the sky, and pitch darkness help movements of imagination; these conditions support, for example, the surfacing of hypnagogic images (Godfroy 2018). Dance researcher Alice Godfroy sees dance as one of these places for attention to drift.¹²⁷ If dance performances are places to rehearse one’s imagination, I add that reading in performance affords places to practice one’s implication in the imaginations of others. At events of reading in performance, one’s imagination is mobilized in the same space and at the same time as others. These simultaneities improve porosities.

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¹²⁷ Godfroy writes: ‘Diving into a performance is akin to a hypnotic experience induced by immersion devices – the theatre room, the cinema room, the reading room – in which our bodies will go to ‘plug in’ to what ‘Yves Citton calls “operators of trance:” scenic work, film or book. If the aesthetic experience

is favourable to the emergence of a captive consciousness, it nonetheless invites less to total immersion than to a precarious alternation between immersion and critical withdrawal’ (2018:np, *my translation*).

Ca peut être une rivière
Une route avec une petite bête au dessus
La bête avec quelqu'un qui lit
Non avec des pages dans sa main
Beaucoup de mains
Beaucoup de lettres
Beaucoup de sapins

This can be a river
 A road with an insect on it
 The insect with someone who reads
 No someone holding pages in her hand
 Many hands
 Many letters
 Many pine trees

In the development of the concept of *free* documentation, I observe documents that are either conceived as a performance in the performance or/and that invoke the practice of reading. As stated in the introduction, the scope of the practices I observe is limited. Yet, my intention is not to extract data from an observation of a large group of performances. Rather, I attempt here to think with these selected performances and practices. I am aware that there are other kinds of documents in performance, other examples of active mediation of the performance in the performance. I am thinking for instance of subtitles. In the multi channel video installation and film by Rosie Heinrich *We always need heroes* (2020), subtitles use symbols from movement notation and highlight interstices. Spaces between the spoken language and the written text feed an attention for differences in the spectator reader of Heinrich's video installation. In my experience of Heinrich's work, an intimate yet polyphonic poetry grows from this attention to differences.

Choreographer Alix Eynaudi writes – for *Chesterfield* (2017) – a sentence that I read as a magician's promise, a promise of metamorphosis: 'bookworms will crawl into thin air and turn into

fireflies' (2017b). Readers in performance are bookworms. I let go of the 'book' in the word 'bookworms' – 'Books – gone' – and I stay with 'worms' a little bit. Worms move in places in which nothing seems to move. They make the soil they live in more alive. Worms cultivate hospitable soils.¹²⁸ I sense in the act of reading in performance a *making* that – with the words of Jeremy Damian – 'may collectively become a recipient of care' (Damian 2020:np). Reading in performance enables a practice of making attention and this practice demands implicated gestures of participation that include: withdrawing, looking, touching, levitating, dreaming, dissolving, eating, digesting, attending to heterogeneous practices, attending 'to the rhizomes of all things that we encounter' (Lacey in Doruff et. al 2021:147), assembling, and breathing with.

I cannot know what the bookworms transform themselves into, I cannot know if they turn into fireflies, 'because I am not a wizard.'¹²⁹ But I was a bookworm many times and I assembled graphic pages after moving with artistic practices, eating them, digesting them. I discovered fireflies, which transform the space-time of live performance. I saw the possibility of another economy of the performing arts; cultivating practices, poetics, listening to the audible and non-audible voices that compose them. I contemplate the fireflies. I glimpse at a performing art form, which seizes nothingness, solitude, and absence, to demonstrate the necessity of these spaces and the care that hides in them *on the other side, over on this side*.

128 Informed by the field of regenerative agriculture in which my brother evolves, and informed by his library of permaculture books, workbooks, philosophical, ecological, and ethical books, I am thinking about living soils in the context of performing arts: living soils that need decomposition, fermentation, and diversity, to support sustainability. How might we regenerate the soils of performing arts, enable diversity, defend

and support the right to experiment outside of precarization?

129 These are the words of Vincent Gambini, also known as Augusto Corrieri, who performed a magic show over the phone for *Dial-a-Spectacle* (Gallier and van der Putt 2020) as ricochets of *Papier incommestible* (Gallier 2020).

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Appendix

YOU CAN READ ME OR I CAN READ
FOR YOU BUT I AM ALSO READING AT
THE SAME TIME

Conversation with Mette Edvardsen, 2017

I attended *Time has fallen asleep* in the afternoon sunshine (Edvardsen 2010) in February 2012 and in March 2017 in Amsterdam. In May 2017, the project was performed in Brussels within the Kunstenfestivaldesarts. I met Mette Edvardsen on May 18th, 2017.

We are sitting in the exhibition space for *THFAITAS* at he Ravenstein Galerie in Brussels. Around us, a few living books seat with their spectator-readers. There is also a library of resources, and a library of re-written books (books that the living books re-wrote). Below is the transcription of our recorded conversation.

Emilie Gallier: In *THFAITAS* performers are readers who learned a book by heart, and spectators are readers who listen. What is your vision of the reader?

Mette Edvardsen: There is a required rigor in the act of learning by heart. It makes a difference from reading as interpreting. In that sense, I am not really a reader, but I am the book. Or I am a reader who learns by heart, which is specific to readers of poetry. In the moment of the performance, with the spectator, we are reading like we walk through, we fly over.

In thinking of reading there is also the question of what motivates the choice of the book you read. In this work, it is not my choice that is important. What this library of living books represents is something else than what the books are about. The language is also rhythm; it is also structure, and texture. Material is just passing through us somehow. Why did I come to this now, what were you asking before?

EG: I was asking about readers. There are the readers who spent time with the books, with this rigor of learning by heart. They do not interpret the book, rather they are the book. These readers books open themselves to someone else – the spectator – who is a fresh reader in a way. Bruno de Wachter, who is the book *Verzamelde gedichten* for *THFAITAS* (2010), told me that one spectator asked him to repeat the same poem over and over again so she could learn it as well. She was a reader, a spectator, who decided to learn by heart too. I am curious of the awareness of the 'presence' of other readers. Victoria Pérez Royo also mentions this awareness of readers from past and from the future (2017:np).

ME: One of us is a literature scholar and he sometimes writes poetry reviews. When he started the project he said: 'I consider myself as a reader.' Then he was telling us how he started to learn by heart when writing a review on a new poetry collection. He learns by heart to be able to really read the poems before reviewing them. You learn a lot about reading poetry from learning it by heart. Of course to learn a novel by heart is a bit different. There are always these latent questions: 'am I understanding it right am I doing it right?' There is no right way of reading and by learning by heart you see something else.

Thinking of the reader, we have over there [in the reference library] an article, written by a University professor, Masschelein, *E-ducating the gaze* (2010). There is a passage where he refers to *One-Way Street* by Walter Benjamin (1979). He compares the copyist and the readers. As a reader you go through the path. The copyists or the ones who learn by heart follow the path but then really curve that path too. Another book that keeps coming back is *If on a winter's night a traveller* by Calvino (1979). It is another example of a book where the relation to the reader is very much engaged in the writing of the book itself.

EG: When looking at reading I have been connecting it to dreaming. I am thinking of one quote by Michel de Certeau in an essay called 'Reading as Poaching' (1984). He thinks of reading in terms of daydreaming and of exercising the sense of ubiquity or an impertinent absence. He sees reading as relating with darkness. You need obscurity around the book to enter it; you need to exclude other things.

ME: We use that word: the reader. We use that word and sometimes people are a bit confused because the same word means different relations on different sides on the book let's say. So I am reading or you are reading. Or you can read me or I can read for you, but I am also reading at the same time. And I like that this is not resolved.

We start by saying 'I am the book.' Being the book is impossible, but by saying 'I am the book,' it becomes possible. Again, I like to think it is not my interpretation, it is not I who present the book: I am the book.

EG: I remember hearing you talk in Amsterdam about how the book became part of you, that you are the book also because it affects your language.

ME: Some of us say that you always have a quote ready for something or some moments of life somehow. In the re-written edition of 'the cat,' when I was writing – we all write our own preface or postface for the rewritten books – I allowed that other language to take a little bit of space. How I wrote my preface is probably not exactly how I would write in English.

EG: Would you consider *THFAITAS* to be a participatory performance?

ME: There is something with this focus on participatory, which sometimes, I find difficult. It is a bit symptomatic of how things are in our time: things are direct, we do it, we do it, and then we feel we are engaged but I think that is a false impression. When I am sitting in the dark in the theatre I am as much a participant as when I have to go and engage. This fake idea of 'now we are doing something together' can be for me emptier than only listening to someone or looking. There is an obsession of including and letting people participate, with which I have a problem. I also feel there can be really important and good things about that, but it is also an easy thing to use, and it can actually be quite empty.

In our case, I really don't think participation is a thing. In a sense you could say that *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* is a super classical set up. It is not classical because we are not sitting in the theatre but it is a performance with an audience, which is receiving and we don't need anything else from the audience than to listen. Whether we have an exchange at the end or not is not important. Someone who wrote about my work associated it to relational aesthetics. This performance has nothing to do with relational aesthetics. If I make the reading of the book to a person and this person stands up and leaves, I am happy with that. The performance is not instrumental for us to be able to speak together, so that finally there is this social moment. It is almost like everything is fitting into this current regime of the world: every moment has to be facilitated, it is difficult to have any space, and everything is a bit the same thing. In *THFAIAS* the social aspect is not important. If we can have a chat in the end it is good. But I am doing poetry. This is art, and it stands without the chat.

EG: The reason I bring the issue of participation is because I feel participation could be approached differently. Reading can propose a quality of participation. Looking at reading in relation to participation, I am inspired by Daniel Pennac who writes *The rights of the reader* (2006). And these rights are for instance to not read, to jump over pages, to not finish a book, to re-read, to allow Bovarysme (it has to do with one's sensations as one reads), to read anywhere, to read out loud, and as well the right to keep quiet. I thought these could be the rights of the participant as well. Pennac's book is a novel about the resistance of a teenager to reading. How he loved reading and being read stories and how the love faded out.

ME: One day my daughter understood she could read. There was the magic of that moment. She would say 'now, mum you lie down.' She would sit and she would read for me. But then she realized: 'if I can read myself you are not going to read for me.' I observed in her this moment of discovery, the pleasure, the joy of reading. I was fascinated. I told her 'you know we still read, you can read, and I can read. Sometimes we can be next to each other, you read your thing, I read my thing, and sometimes I read for you.' Through this project [*Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine*] adults can be moved. I think it is because it brings something from memories, from childhood maybe; but also this dedication, the fact someone is taking this time for you. Someone speaks to you by heart. You understand that this moment has a lot of time behind it. Some people say it is like a gift. Sometimes it can be that people cry. Many people speak about this moment 'when my mother stopped reading for me.' Reading for each other is such a nice thing, why would we stop?

EG: In his book, Pennac points at the fear of not understanding, or of misunderstandings. A teacher asks a teenager to swallow a heavy book and to tell his understanding of this book. The teenage stops at page two, frozen.

ME: You should add this book to our reference library. We started to make index cards where we add the type of the book, the author, and the reader who suggested it. We create a whole collection with books people suggest.

EG: That brings me to other readers. In the beginning, as spectator of *THFAIAS*, I was actively looking for other readers and then this desire disappeared. But I imagined book circles gathering audience who read the poems of Hans Faverey. I wonder if such things, chains of readers, or reading circles, happened around your project?

ME: Nothing organized. But there have been occasionally readers who want to continue with a book. Once there was a reader, a spectator, who was actually the one who wrote the book. So there are exceptional cases. But between the readers, I don't know.

EG: Victoria Pérez Royo wrote: 'Time has fallen... is a beautiful endeavour in its economy of means and its simplicity: to memorize books; then take them to paper from memory. But this simplicity has a great impact because it shakes the stability and the fundamental principles of uniqueness and authenticity of origin on which not only written tradition is based, but our culture in general. Being faithful to the truth, not of textual identity, but of the life of a text in connection with a body, is a liberating gesture that allows for differences, which breaks with a purity that is only achieved by destroying all ambivalence, all equivocation, all increment, all that is excessive, that is, of the body for the letter and of the authorships that are smuggled in between the lines (Pérez Royo 2017:np).' How do differences manifest between readers?

ME: Each reader influences the reading I think. Each reading is different. Not radically different. But if I think of the hundreds of time I have done 'the cat' for example... When you think of a book on the shelves it comes alive when someone picks it up and reads it, otherwise it's just there. That is the same with us. It is in me. My book exists in me because you are reading it.

In Faverey's collection of poems, there is a specific work on the page with the spaces around the words. You would think that when you learn, you keep these spaces, and that it would also give the rhythm. But because [Bruno de Wachter] had been embodying it, internalizing, speaking it for so long – it was not the intention in the beginning to write it down – when he wrote it down, he was incapable of reproducing the spaces. So he was never

happy with it. Then we somehow found a way with underscores in different length showing the rhythm of the poem the way he reads it. With regards to authorship, we were in contact with the widow of Hans Faverey. She received the re-written book and we spoke on the phone. She said this made her very happy because she recognizes the poems; she sees that these are the poems, yet they are completely different. So the reading of Bruno was there, for her, in the rewritten version.

What is a mistake? When we are speaking our books, mistakes come. I make some mistakes with English I am not aware of. I might not make these mistakes the next time. But the moment you write it down, it then becomes one version of the book. How do you correct a version like that? When you make an edition, you have copyeditor. Here you cannot have a copyeditor. Is it a typo, a mistake, or is it how it is now, in the memory? It is interesting to think of the bastard version of a book.

EG: Although we know the pressure of erasing mistakes, I find this space for miscommunication powerful. Another word comes to mind when thinking of the reader. It is the word implication, coming from my being French. What does it say for you, this word?

ME: It is confusing for me. It makes me think of what it implies, so what it means or what it does. Not so much in connection with the other. To be implicated, if I think of it with a bit of a French lens, certainly with the idea of the reading and of the crime, I could think of the rights. What is this version, what do we do to the books? Even more so when we are publishing them. In Athens, one of the authors of the books spoken by heart came to listen to the book. It was very beautiful. He brought his whole family, four persons. We made an exception. He said: 'I spend such a long time with this material, to hear someone else speaking it was so nice!' I thought, why would this put someone off? It is tricky. One thing is the ethics, and the other thing is the economy; people don't want you to be a threat. I think that, on the contrary, if anything, we would have people leaving our performance and wanting to purchase their book. Asking permission is nice, to see what the answers are. With Faverey, his widow was so implicated in the exchange. She was feedbacking, calling me for better translation. It is all about the joy of reading and being these books more than claiming something.

I attended the performance *The Roof* by Alice Pons and Olivia Reschovsky at Veem House for Performance in Amsterdam for three evenings in November and December 2016. My interest was picked by the following proposition written in the project's description: 'The Roof is a public and collective art work addressing and using the different expertise there is in the construction of its structure and identity' (see <https://veem.house/ENG/the-roof>). After experiencing the project as a spectator, I asked a few questions to Alice Pons and Olivia Reschovsky. The conversation took place online via emails and offline between December 2016 and September 2017.

Emilie Gallier: You describe *The Roof* as 'a public and collective art work addressing and using the different expertise there is in the construction of its structure and identity.' I read that *The Roof* could be a pretext for people to come together and share expertise. What kind of expertise are you looking for?

Alice Pons: In each project, when we work with people, we try to look at things they like to do in their life and we listen to how they would like to take part to our project. For example, one woman once came to the build-up of our exhibition and gave us a workshop on hanging wallpaper properly. We gave her a different artistic task in the evening. She took people for a silent walk through the space. One other man was into helping others, hosting, and being social. We worked on this specific aspect with him and assigned him a little performative part during one of the event, about cheering together. He took it very seriously and prepared a whole small performance about it. Something he never did before. Other days he was happy to help us with practical things, as it was things he was used to do in his daily life. Experimenting with our different skills and knowledge is one important aspect of our work and collaboration with people.

Olivia Reschovsky: We always say that everyone has a certain expertise and I would add they have expertise they would not admit they have. They don't think they have this expertise or they do not dare to say it. We are very much interested in this hidden expertise. That is why we invited the children to imagine utopian buildings with us, to think of what they would need in the future. Or the homeless people, whom we thought are true experts of public spaces and have very valuable

information. What comes to my mind is how scientists, architects, designers, can come up with beautiful design of spaces that remain unused in reality. The relation to the people is lost. We must ask people what they really need. There could be much more invitation to the 'ordinary' people (like all of us) to think about our cities and how we want to live.

EG: This hidden expertise in relation to urban planning makes me think of landscape designer Lawrence Halprin. In 1969, he invented the method *RSVP Cycles*: Resources, Score, Valuation, and Performance (1969/2010). This method is a participatory device. Lawrence Halprin's practice of the *RSVP Cycles* was a response to its time affected by tensions of the cold war, contestations against the Vietnam War, reject of mass productions of the society of consumption, and condemnation of excesses. What is, in your time, motivating your search for people's hidden expertise?

OR: I don't want to be so radical to say that knowledge often stops you from daring to do things. It is not true and I don't mean hidden expertise is not based on knowledge. Hidden expertise for me is a gift that you just have. You might have learned it, or practiced it, but is definitely not in the focus, in the front page. It is hidden. It is so rewarding, to find this out about people, to discover skills you would not imagine they had in the first place. It is then a generous gift, something the person appreciates to share. People are so happy we approach them this way. It is not patronizing, it is involving them equally in the game, in the work. Beside the fact that this creates a great atmosphere to work in, where everyone is happily working and does his/her best, it also produces amazing materials, unexpected and full of surprises.

AP: On a personal level, things become more exciting this way – by including people's expertise – because the usual power dynamics change. On a more political level, if our society worked more with hidden expertise, it would give space to differences in political practices. I think of politics as part of our everyday life; we do not all share the same abilities but we all deal with everyday politics. Instead of only recognizing known expertise, the many hidden expertise of people could be very useful; because they deal with life and might teach us

how to function together, how to understand a city, society and so on.

EG: Lawrence Halprin denounced the passivity of audiences 'receptacles for works that are made by others' (Halprin 1969/2010:24). He criticized a society where information is pre-chewed, where one is told what to think and how to react. Expertise is profitable when it is an 'invitation to think, to travel, to dream, to activate something in the receiver' (Halprin 1969/2010:24). When talking about the *RSVP Cycles*, Halprin sets passivity against activity of the audience (the audience needs to be activated!). What is your position with regard to this dichotomy? How are you thinking of different modes of participation?

OR: What is passive in my eyes might be super active for the person in front of me. Our level of activation is very different. That is why we started to think about the different levels of participation or engagement. For example, with *The Roof*, not everyone has to hold it, or has to be under it; there might be people for whom it is too much, and they feel more comfortable following it from far and being its witness. What we do is we are out there, we are working, we are activated and we will be there the next day and the next day and the next day, so there is time for people to make their own move towards us or towards *The Roof* or whatever is out there. My only little tool to work with engagement is time: time, continuity, and persistence in staying in one place, devotion, and continuity.

AP: Sometimes people take part in very small things but those small things will make a difference. When performing *BlueGorilla* very often some people just hang out with us. Often they are homeless or eccentrics of the city. They do not necessarily talk to us but they share space with us, they come where we go, and there is a mutual acknowledgment and respect of each other's presence in our shared public space. This small action is for me the example of a way to take part. But from the outside it could look like this guy does not care about what is happening. Participation is only perceptible with time and if you give attention to details. So yes this is something we learned and are still learning: how to create projects, which facilitate different levels of participation, giving space to very subtle ones.

EG: When you describe the example of designers making projects that lost connection with their users, I think of miscommunication. Do you have example of miscommunication or misunderstanding in your projects? How might miscommunication be addressed, made aware of, and take fully part to the experience of the artistic work?

AP: Our work is full of misunderstandings and miscommunication. Our practice is about trying to communicate and therefore it sometimes fails. We practice with time and insistence. Sometimes it is fine that others, who make their own understanding of our project, use it in unexpected ways. We then remain present to find out together the new meaning of what we do. When it is important for us that people understand why we are here, we adapt and change our methods. In June 2017, when we practiced *The Roof* outside and wanted to get in touch with workers from a factory of the neighbourhood we worked in, these workers first thought we were activists protesting against their work. We didn't want them to think we had negative judgments about them. We just had a naïve fascination. We tried to invent a protocol. We invited them to our office to answer some questions. This was another failure because it was too demanding; it looked suspicious and formal. What worked best in the end was very practical: to be here and to smoke with them in their spot, or to join them when it rained to protect ourselves, and of course to come back everyday.

EG: How do you facilitate differences and contrasts under *The Roof*?

OR: We have a sort of 'protocol' at the beginning in which we say: we should not worry about each other; everyone can do what they want. These are only words, but it is a little gesture we find important at the beginning. We also ask very different type of people to speak up in our events.

AP: This is something we practice and experiment with constantly. We don't have a method; we are constantly searching. As Olivia mentioned, the protocol is a way to softly guide our audience/participants so that they can find their ways through the potential mess or awkwardness of the situation. It can sometimes make a real difference; because it allows breaking the different expectations people have before they join us. We hope for spectators to

start from a place where we (Olivia and me) are not expected to solve everything for the others, but that we (the whole group) will have to work together. The challenge is to find the balance between how much do we guide and how much do we let things become a bit more challenging. We are trying to step away from the idea that it is only nice to come all together and to introduce a bit more the idea that no it is not easy to work with very different people and things don't go the way you want, things might be less efficient but it's ok. We want to raise a collective question: how to be together with people you don't understand?

EG: What kind of exchanges do you wish to create within the audience of *The Roof*?

OR: We now experiment in maintaining *The Roof* outside. For example, in Frascati's hallway (Amsterdam theatre venue) we took the large fabric and we held it up with our hand. We had a sign saying: 'We hold *The Roof* but if you would like to release our arm or simply hold it with us, it would be great.' Some people were coming for a short time to hold it with us, and left also quite fast. Then it was nothing, only holding a fabric. But for people who stayed longer, it started to work in a very surprising way. This useless action suddenly became useful through the action of maintenance together. They took responsibility for it, and so it started to mean something to them. Alice said something nice, this small-scale example is like how it goes with MOHA in general: the more you stick around, the more you join in, the more it makes sense. So, with *The Roof* I think we are interested in this sort of exchange as you name it. We come. We are there. We will stay. We have a proposal but you need to maintain this with us in some ways. Otherwise its 'value' stays hidden. And this maintenance can be different things. In Frascati it was deliberately holding *The Roof*, its fabric. But we would like to research more on how this maintenance can appear.

AP: From proposing a lot of discussions and debates in the first phase of *The Roof*, we are now moving to offering more simple performative actions like holding the fabric. Those actions are somehow a way to practice these ideas. One word, which is important in our current research, is 'cooperation.' You cooperate to accomplish what you can't do alone. You cooperate through a conversation in trying to understand each other. You cooperate through practical work, building a city. You

cooperate in every action of your daily life. With *The Roof* we are practicing the skill of cooperating in different levels. 1: Through a practical action that can't be sustained by only one person: holding a large fabric above our heads. *The Roof* can't exist, can't be sustained and maintained without the other. 2: Through the different spaces this action of holding the fabric might create. These spaces adopt multiple formats: a temporary agora for public discussions, a place to share knowledge, a place to wait, to be protected, to play, to act, to build, to dance, to hang out. *The Roof* can only grow from this act of working for it together.

EG: 'The more you stick around, the more you join in, the more it makes sense.' 'We come. We are there. We stay.' I am thinking of *The Doubtful Guest* by Edward Gorey (1957): the story of a creature who appears and sticks around for about seventeen years. This doubtful guest is just here. With no reason, no need to respond. In the way you describe the action of maintaining with others, holding, cleaning etc. There seems to be a dosage of absurdity, or in your words uselessness. What is the role of this uselessness or absurdity? What does it do to how we are being together with others?

AP: We are doing what we are doing because this gives us hope to the future. Bringing a poetic window into a place where only economical values and efficiency are in the front is very important. Working small scale, having a talk with the woman who walks her dog, with the man who sits in front of his window to smoke his cigarette every morning. Building an imagination, which allows us to think a bit beyond existing systems, with slightly different logics. Engaging into absurd actions but treating them as very important. These values are not measurable nor quantifiable. Art does not make sense but brings us into the unknown. It would be paternalist from my side to think these people need me to feel better with my art in their life. No, I turn to people because I think I need to meet different people, and I need radical imagination. An imagination which relates strongly to reality but which does not transform me into a social worker or an entrepreneur who will come up with a super good idea like creating a new UBER or Airbnb. It is my responsibility to not give up on finding the poetic window of a place. This is what I defend

in my application for funding. This is why we are out there, in the street. This is why we come with some weird ideas and we try them out, to invent new games with people. It takes time, it is clumsy but this work is important. Not everything comes as a readymade piece to enjoy. Things need to be worked on, thought through, experimented; this is what brings the exchange, the dialogue.

OR: Value is not always about growing or about numbers of how many people liked your post or bought your t-shirt. There are things we cannot name but that are essential to our life. The beauty of art is that you cannot measure it, that you cannot name it, it just happens. You can say this work is shit; this work is not worth it. Our tax money is spent on much worse than some little meaningless art projects that might have no impact in the moment. But if these art projects would not exist it would be such a dark and boring world in my opinion. Even education I think should be art. The way to learn and what we should learn should be art. Being able to be vague and unproductive. Learn that we can just lie in the garden and think nothing or talk about poetry or just play with words should be taught in school. Nussbaum has an interesting book where he states education is dead because it killed imagination and creativity. I want to defend art and the right to be meaningless and economically invaluable. Community in my opinion cannot be a purpose; rather it is a side effect. That is why I don't like to call our work community art. Being together for the sake of being together is one of the biggest powers we have. We don't have to explain.

EG: What is your expertise in *The Roof*? Do you intend to transmit it to the audience?

OR: We organise events in which people can dance, eat, sing, be creative, etc. We let people take lead in these activities. We call them artists, co-creators and we count on their inputs and opinions. Furthermore, I also think that we have the 'expertise' to talk to a lot of different type of people and handle the chaos that comes with it. That is one of our main 'expertise' I believe, and the one we are constantly practicing as well. So, when people join our events, they encounter this diversity of people.

AP: I would maybe call our expertise 'performative hosting' or maybe transforming ourselves into 'facilitators'. Something about guiding people through certain situations.

Creating frames for encounters. For that we have our little tricks that we borrow from daily social situations that most people can relate to. It is often involving playing together, bringing us back to this excitement we had while playing some games as kids, not being scared of being lame and enjoy it through dancing, singing, dressing up, building something, cooking, eating, drinking.

EG: Would the name implication be relevant for you to think of spectators participating to *The Roof*?

AP: I am not sure I understand implication the way you do but the way I see it is related to a certain commitment and responsibility taken in the way we participate into something. This is a direction we find interesting. We are also more and more interested in the action of maintaining something together, which connects to implication. *The Roof* is not something given to you, it is something before all that will only exist if you make it happen. We need to work for it. It is not a place to be consumed.

EG: I understand implication as being partner in crime. Implication is an engagement, often with time (duration or reiteration). Implication also has a dimension of shared affect.

OR: In the different works we do, we started to feel a growing necessity of a so-called protocol speech. It first appeared within *Move. Dance. Act.* (weekly 'open artistic platform' in Amsterdam). Although there are facilitators, there is a lot of chaos: not everyone is doing what we should be doing, people are running around, talk, and some people can be seen as awkward. So, we thought to say a few words at the beginning. We say that it is an experiment and that we never know how the outcome will go. We say that we care for each other, but we don't have to worry and we are all responsible for ourselves. These sentences are becoming quite important and come back with other projects as well. Like with *The Roof* at Veem House for Performance. It feels we are dreaming about a public that would take care of itself. We always prepare a trajectory, we don't come with empty hands, and we do make a lot of effort to help and guide people through our events. But at the same time for the work we do, people need to step up: I would call this a responsibility for your own journey.

AP: Sometimes, the more we try to engage people, to guide them, to treat them as participants, the more we get the opposite of a feeling of 'implication.' By designing a great *parcours*, by making it easy to understand etc., even with our best intentions, we generate a certain passivity. How from being their guide, can we make them their own guides and each other guides? Sometimes we want to do too much but maybe it is about doing less and giving more time to the action we propose.

EG: The title *The Roof* creates expectations and associations with precarity (homeless, without roof, refugees). Did you discuss about precarity?

OR: Yes, we discussed it. But we are also taking a more general understanding of *The Roof* so not focusing on this specific meaning. From the start, we tried not to limit people's imagination on what a roof can be. It was surprising to hear so many different approaches and ideas. For example, one guy in the shelter told us, that one of his best roofs was a tree in Vondelpark. We are interested in finding a place for all kinds of interpretation as for what a roof could be. Of course a roof is essential to a refugee or a homeless but actually we found out that their fantasies about the roof are very close to those of people who are not urgently in need of a roof. I personally moved away from the idea of *The Roof* as a space and closer to this invisible structure that we may create in the city. *The Roof* is this moving 'institute' that can be put up where there is the need for this invisible symbol. To come together. This does not have to (and should not) be about a consensual place. The opposite of consensus might lead to more interesting outcome.

EG: I share this curiosity for dissensus. Some experiences and words pronounced under *The Roof* are utopian. Is there a danger at the other side, at the back of this utopia (when realizing the friendship is just temporary, the gift is actually not a gift, etc.)?

AP: It is not our direct intention to only create utopia together. We are trying to lead *The Roof* to a space where we get confronted to the limits of our own dream to ask from there: what can we still do together? How can our collective imagination be imprinted in reality? We search for this radical imagination, deeply

engaged and involved in reality. Utopia is not the horizon you see very far but the action of walking towards it. So it doesn't matter if the horizon is never reachable, what is important is to keep moving and to look at the walk, the path. The horizon informs the walk, it can give us a direction, but it will never be the final point.

OR: We are not the only one responsible to *The Roof's* maintenance. *The Roof* represents the people who are under it. If the people under take the responsibility to bring the friendship further, it will go further or make the gift a real gift.

EG: What would be less obvious forms of involvement and contribution that might yet be very impactful?

AP: It relates to what I said about cooperation. I try to see different levels of cooperation in the work. Exchanging emails with people supporting us from where they are. Exchanging letters with someone. It could be that someone never comes to the events but plays a very important role in the process by helping us one time, or joining our conversation, spreading the rumour of the work.

EG: How far can expertise be expressed? How to allow the depths of your knowledge to be expressed?

OR: Time. One of the reasons we founded MOHA was to bring all works under one umbrella. The more we grow, the more we reflect, learn, reconsider, try again. I hope time allows the depth of our own knowledge to emerge and the knowledge of the people who stick to us as well.

EG: When we discussed the difficulty of calling your work participatory, you mentioned 'for us the aspect of taking part is more a side effect.' Hence my question: a side effect to what?

OR: Indeed it is hard to call our work participatory or community art. These terms come with a load of expectations in people's mind. For us, the aspect of taking part is more of a side effect. The problem is that the word participation promises an exchange following the logic of giving and taking. This is not our logic. 'The right to the city.... is a right to change ourselves by changing the city. It is, moreover, a common rather than an individual right. The freedom to make and remake ourselves and our cities is, I want to argue, one

of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights' (Harvey 2008:23). Our attention is moving towards the city, but there is no city without people, so it is about people in the end. I would say, we are like kids wanting to play in the city and we need other kids to do so. When I say, participation is not the aim, but the side effect, the aim is to build and make our cities playful, poetic, absurd, different, whatever, we need.

EG: What is your responsibility to the audience?

OR: I think, we both are very devoted, in our private life as much as in our artistic life. People can count on us. There is continuity. You can grow with us, as much as we grow with you. Anyone who wants to join MOHA in any ways, we welcome and we stick to the person. At our *Move.Dance.Act.* platform, one guy Picasso comes every Tuesday. He is very sweet, but he cannot concentrate and does not always follow the group. It sometimes distracts the rest and can be a bit annoying. By now we got used to him and accepted he functions like this. Last Tuesday we went outside with the group for a chain walk, holding hands. He did it for a while but then he just went on his own way. Then we stopped and begun to do our dance – we have a small choreographic folk dance. He was not doing it, and it was fine, but then in the middle I could feel he was ready to join in, so I just put my hand out, I was not insisting, I just offered it, it could have been easily ignored and it would have been also fine, but he grabbed it, and from that moment, he was in. I use this example, because this is how I think about including audience. We are there. We are doing our thing. If you want to join in, you are in. If you want to leave, you can leave. My responsibility is this readiness to take people in, when the moment is there. Not joining is to us a form of inclusion, of being with.

AP: The more people feel implicated – to reuse your word – the more they come and find their place without us having to do too much about it. When people stay around and want to take part more actively then we naturally will give them more space and more responsibilities. We know they might disappear again. We are here and we carry on.

I attended *The breathing archive* (2016) by Anouk Llaurens at Morpho in Brussels on January, 21st 2017 as part of *Landings*, presentations of a.pass researches (advanced performance and scenography studies – post Master program). After experiencing the practice as a participant, I asked a few questions to Anouk. The conversation took place online and offline between January 2017 and May 2017.

Emilie Gallier: How does hand-eye coordination work? What does it do to the experience of reading?

Anouk Llaurens: Hand-eye coordination is the subject of my research on poetic, polyphonic and multimodal documentation. On my application to a.pass, I wrote: 'The object of the documentation is 'hand-eye coordination' which is the coordination between the hand and the eye necessary to execute simple task like taking a glass to drink it, opening a door, putting on a coat, writing or drawing. By choosing this basic and sophisticated skill, shared by every human being (worker, librarian, dancer, scientist, artist, philosopher, politicians) I wish to talk to anybody and bring her attention to the intelligence and poetry that lies within their daily life actions. Hand-eye coordination is the result of a developmental process that leads to language and conceptual capacities. Documenting hand-eye coordination will focus us back to the physical anchor of conceptual knowledge and will produce knowledge from this physical anchor. This may propose a new possibility for dialogue, exchange and coordination between the 'practical' world and the 'academic' one. It might create a middle ground that questions the separation and hierarchy between matter and idea, body and mind, making and seeing, subjectivity and objectivity, intimacy and distance.'

The research process started from my wish to document movement explorations that connect hands and eyes, from the perspective of multiple dancers. We started practicing simple movement scores and explorations that I borrow from Lisa Nelson like: 'play with your hand entering and exiting your visual field, alternating with eyes open or eyes closed,' 'follow your hand with you eyes open or your eyes closed.' I intuitively selected scores because of the 'unusual' dance they would give form to.

Hands and eye movements can bridge dance, daily action, manual work, and craftsmanship. Hands and eyes are involved

in non-verbal communication and this kind of communication can be seen as an un-noticed dance that all human – and may be some animals – are experts in.

The development of hand-eyes coordination is one of the biggest challenges of babies first year of life. In order to explore the world, babies must put touching and looking together. The skill of developing hand control is often less noticed and valued than walking but it is just as vital. New-borns don't know that their hands are a part of them. The baby may use one hand to play with the other, almost as though they were toys. At some point when the baby holds a toy that make sound and shake it, his eyes and ear locate the sound; the baby makes the connection between the sound produced and the fact that he is holding the toy. For the first six months, babies use their eyes and hands separately. Coordinating hand and eyes allows the baby to explore and interact with his environment. It is through this sensorial interaction that he learns about himself and his environment. Cognition is already happening at this level.

I am inspired by developmental movement pattern defined by Body Mind Centering® and also by stages of cognitive development described by Jean Piaget. According to Piaget, assimilation and accommodation require an active learner, not a passive one, because problem-solving skills cannot be taught, they must be discovered. As I wrote in my a.pass application I want to highlight that conceptual capacities are rooted in the sensory motor skills and interaction with the material world.

I am busy with poetic documentation. Hand-eye coordination is also used to draw, write, and film, leave traces. My research is setting a kind of 'infinite loop' where the object of document is also used as a tool for documentation. We are documenting hand- eye coordination with hand-eye coordination. The content is the tool.

I am interested to reconnect the 'higher' human cognitive stages to the 'lower' ones. Or may be to bring them at the same level so there is no higher and no lower. All kinds of information – paper, ink, colour, smell, meaning, letters, shape image, though, dream – are available and can possibly combine. It is a bit like an unfolding of the brain layers to allow unexpected association to happen and generate new kinds of understandings.

For me, *The breathing archive* is not a reading practice but a multi modal and collective composition practice. People are

invited to compose a poetic and live document together. What if we approach books or printed texts as a multi layered information support that combine sensorial and semantic information? The document does not appear when people start to read, but it is there from the start, from silence. Reading out loud is the last level of evolution of the score but the document is composed by all the layers of presence like all the layers of paper that are themselves layers of time. The document is multi modal and live. It points toward the present. I believe that rooting the collective composition of the document into the present moment – the breathing, touching, earing, seeing – influences what people choose to read or not to read and influences their experiences of words. I am curious to observe what motivates their choices and I need to practice more with people. Do they choose to read this randomly, because it resonates with what they know, because they learned something, because it is dialogue with what someone else has just said, because they want to overlap with someone else's voice and it is just the right moment? So many layers. I wish to give some visibility to these layers of intelligence and to how they participate in the choices that are made by people, in the composition of the document and in this ephemeral and contingent history.

I think about reading as a physical act: the movement of the eyes, the tone of the voice, the pace, the organisation of the body, the sound of words, the taste of words in the mouth, the loss of definition. I remember myself as a child repeating a word like 'tomate-tomate-tomate-tomate' until meaning would dissolve into sound. I loved not to recognize and still love it. I remember someone telling me once, after silently reading a crumpled page, that it felt like his eyes where doing motor cross. The page was a landscape and he could feel the muscular adaptation of the eyes to the relief of the page. This guy worked a lot with Lisa Nelson too, and was very aware of the physicality of vision. (At some point in her life Lisa stopped dancing and started to film. As a highly sensitive dancer she could feel how the camera and the action of filming was moving her and especially how her whole body was organising itself around the movement of her eyes while filming.)

EG: How did you arrive to crumpling as core gesture to your reading score for *The breathing archive*?

AL: After a residency at Contredanse in 2015, I wrote (in French): 'Le centre de documentation de contredanse à accueilli la recherche du 12 janvier au 29 Février 2015, sous la forme d'un laboratoire intitulé 'documents vivants'. Nous avons (Sonia si Ahmed et moi) adapté une série de documents crée lors de résidences précédentes, à ce contexte particulier. L'adaptation s'est faite en dialogue avec le lieu, les personnes qui y travaillent, leur activité et les objets qui s'y trouvent. Pratiquant dans une bibliothèque dédiée à la danse, nous en sommes rapidement venues à sélectionner des livres en lien avec notre sujet et notre 'background' en danse. Cette sélection s'est faite d'une part pour nourrir notre recherche mais aussi pour faire une proposition subjective qui présentait aux visiteurs une certaine histoire de la danse. Dans cette sélection se trouvaient, des livres d'artistes, de philosophes et de scientifiques comme Lisa Nelson, Lygia Clark, Yvonne Rainer, Fernand Schirren, John Cage, Barbara Manzetti, Alva Noé, Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen, Francisco Varela, A. Montagu, J.J Gibson. Nous avons sortis les livres de leur rayon (de leur verticalité) pour les mettre à plat sur la grande table du centre de documentation. Ils étaient ainsi, visibles et facile d'accès pour tout le monde. Nous les avons ensuite intégrés comme objet dans les scores que nous pratiquions et qui mettaient en jeu la coordination main-œil quand on interagit avec des objets. Nous avons ensuite introduit leur contenu sémantique en les ouvrant au hasard, pour en lire des extraits à haute voix pendant que nous jouions les documents vivants. L'organisation des livres et des archives dans l'espace nous a conduite à questionner les notions d'ordre, de désordre et d'utilisation. Est-il toujours nécessaire que les documents soient rangés par ordre alphabétique dans une bibliothèque? Quel autre ordre proposer? Quelle est la place de la subjectivité dans la sélection des documents? Comment intégrer le rebut, l'échec, ce qui n'est pas sélectionné dans une collection d'archive? Quelle est la place du hasard dans l'accès à l'information? Les documents ont-ils besoin d'être protégés des utilisateurs? Pour donner corps à certaines de ces questions nous avons photocopié des extraits des livres sélectionnés que nous avons ensuite pliés, découpés, mis en boulette. Ces photocopies froissée et pliés se sont entassées au fil du

laboratoire sur la grande table du centre de doc à coté des livres proposés. Elles ont peu à peu occupé le territoire et les visiteurs qui venaient faire leur recherche devaient s'adapter à leur présence. Ces feuilles étaient à prendre, à utiliser et à faire circuler. Certaines personnes les regardaient d'un œil curieux, d'autres se permettaient de les déplier et de les lire, d'autres encore se laissaient dévier de leur but initial pour les utiliser comme point de départ de leur recherche du jour. Les photocopies froissées sont apparues pour nous comme un moyen de questionner la relation entre le statut du savoir, le format d'un document et la transmission de l'information. Comment un contenu peut-il être altéré par sa forme et vice versa? La boulette de papier n'est-elle pas ce qui se trouve habituellement dans la poubelle? Donner des pliages et des boulettes comme documents aux usagers c'était aussi, remettre, littéralement, le savoir entre leurs mains. Comme une sorte d'exagération, la boulette rappelait qu'un document sur papier est à la fois matière et idée. Les visiteurs devaient s'engager encore manuellement et visuellement qu'avec un livre pour défroisser les boulettes et lire leur contenu altéré par les plis. Cette expérience nous a donné envie de créer un objet/livre qui rendrait compte de notre laboratoire au centre de documentation de Contredanse, une rencontre entre l'origami et la boulette de papier. Nous visualisons ce livre comme un objet relationnel entre l'artiste et le visiteur, un entre-deux qui engage autant la coordination main-œil de 'l'artiste' que celle de son 'lecteur' et qui les engage à la fois manuellement et intellectuellement. Nous l'imaginons comme *un livre à faire et à défaire* – tout comme un savoir pour rester vivant est à faire et à défaire.'

This book to do and to undo has been taking the form of different contents in bags played by *The breathing archive*.



Photo by Sol Archer

During our time at Contredanse we also practiced BMC neurological pattern that support hand-eye coordination and especially two of them: 'cellular breathing' and 'navel radiation.' To explore navel radiation pattern is to gather around the navel and expand from it. It is a three-dimensional exploration that folds inward to unfold outward. If we go before the definition of limbs and head and consider the person as three trillions cells organism, there is infinite possibility of combinations, forms and pathways to fold and unfold. For me, navel radiation is connected to the folded potential of human being that could unfold. I imagined the body as a page, the page as a body, as a potential to unfold and combine with other potential unfolding. There are the folds of the brain.

EG: What does crumpling do to the experience of reading?

AL: It does different things to different people I guess. I already mention the guy that felt that his eyes were doing motor cross on the page. Crumpling is hiding, uncrumpling is revealing, what if we reverse? I especially enjoy the uncrumpling of the page when the words are still folded and don't look like words but letters in disorder, piled up at the bottom. It is a kind of animation movie where letters and words become moving creatures. Words are wrinkled, they are old, they already have a life. They may be too old and need to die. The fold is their tomb. They are hiding in the fold. There, in the dark they can touch others that they are not supposed to touch or be associated with. They loose their semantic presence and become matter, shapes, curves, angles. Sometime they disappear because ink has been removed by the repetition. Crumpling brings back words to the material realm. The sound of crumpling is also very present, sometimes too present for me. Sound takes over so one cannot hear what people read out loud. Sound also suggest landscape to me. Insects.

EG: You mentioned shifting from one type of attention to another, what would be these different modes of attention, if you were to list them?

AL: We can make the attention travel and focus on different systems and layers of perception. I have been working with one type of attention so far which is the focused one. I am also interested in more open attention, a more receptive one, like when children don't

actively listen and play in a room and yet get what is said by adult. I am sure it 's happening anyway, people drift away I hope.

EG: One of the participants told how she would appreciate to have more cognitive guidance by you as the expert of *The breathing archive*. I am curious of the interplay between knowledge and expectations of participants of your practice, and I would like to reflect on how levels of expertise and forms of knowledge feed each other. I imagine you experienced differences of expertise around your table many times. Did this situation provide you with tips about differences?

AL: For me the score is cognitive guidance. In terms of exchange, it is happening anyway and some people might not be aware of it. It is a matter of listening and sensitivity. It can be practiced. If people play the score and the archive once, their experience is perfect. I am trying to give up with the concept of improvement. If they play it twice it will be another experience, not better. This practice is about letting go of expertise, coming back to basic: listening, breathing, touching seeing, hearing, paying attention to the presence of things, people, smell, sounds colours, words, meanings. I am interested in un-doing knowledge. This is why the archive is breathing.

EG: I read in the publication of *Landings* (a.pass 2017) that one of your colleagues, Agnes, experienced the breathing archive as 'going to the library without looking for a particular book but just being hungry for thoughts. It feels like eating knowledge.' She asks: 'What kind of food is your reading score?' Another colleague of yours, Sofia, responds for you: 'The food would be the written archive and the eater would be the bookworm.' Sofia was displaced into an imagined reality from engaging with the practice. I also experienced such imaginary trip. Are you interested in facilitating a ground for these imagined realities?

AL: I am very happy that people go for imaginary trip. I am always fascinated to hear the specificity of each one. Expressing these realities? Telling them to other participants? Writing them during the practice? After the practice? After would be a funny thing to do,

sharing imaginary trips after. That would be the imaginary archive of the archive. I imagine people lying on the ground, relaxing, eyes closed, or sitting eyes closed spending a moment in stillness to forget. Then I would invite them to talk and share their trip but speaking through the present tense, like in authentic movement feedback sessions. I would need to try it to see what happens.

Image Index

Image crumbs printed on reused edible papers – misprints, expired books, and leftovers – are inserted between pages. The book drools. Each physical edition of *Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle* holds a different selection of these crumbs, which are numbered and indexed here. Each edition thus holds semi-present images in the form of inserted crumbs, and absent images (which are present elsewhere, in other versions of the book).

- I This postcard was sent by post to the audience of *Papier telephone*. Prior to the performance on 8 October 2020 and on the backside of this postcard, spectators read: ‘Feel invited, THURSDAY, 8 OCTOBER, 8PM UTC+1. Take a paper, a pen, and your phone. Dial 00330 606 04 03. Your access code is 1188703#. You will hear us read pages that you can consult now or anytime here: [post-cie/notation.php](#). We will read with a tactile gaze: our eyes will be feet. We will walk into the page with the intention to see images surface. Over the phone, you can listen in on images while doodling with your pen or move further out and listen in for margins. The phone call will last eighteen minutes and thirty-seven seconds, magician’s promise. Please be on time, warmly, Emilie Gallier with Nina Boas, Camille Gerbeau, Katinka Marac. Dial-a-Spectacle. Doodle by Lars Kynde, June 2020.’
- II Doodles were made by the audience of *Papier telephone*
- III between 4 June and 15 October 2020. Thanks to Camille
- IV Gerbeau, Margarida Guia, Thibaut Prod’homme, Katinka
- V Marac, Vanessa, Fabien Goulmy, Ieke Trinks, Pascale Ansot,
- VI Paul Gerbeau Ansot, Nina Boas, Fransien van der Putt, Jane
- VII Lang, Sinibaldo de Rosa, Alice Chauchat, Jennifer, and
- VIII Samuel Prod’homme Gallier for sharing them.
- IX
- X
- XI
- XII
- XIII
- XIV
- XV
- XVI
- XVII
- XVIII
- XIX
- XX
- XXI
- XXII
- XXIII
- XXIV
- XXV
- XXVI *The Roof* is a public and collective artwork addressing and using the different expertise there is in the construction of its structure and identity. More than being an object, *The Roof* exists through a collective action. It gathers and welcomes an inclusive audience: the diversity of public space. Photo taken at the Veem House for Performance in Amsterdam, November 2016. More information: <https://veem.house/program/the-roof/>

- XXVII A telephone for grief after the Japanese tsunami: one resident of Otsuchi in northern Japan placed an old phone booth at the bottom of his garden with a rotary phone connected to the wind. People come to this phone booth to call those they have lost.
- XXVIII This is page four of the performance book by Diego Gil *Collective Writing Machines*: ‘an eye and the other’ (2012a).
- XXIX The performance *Papier multiforme, Papier comestible* was
- XXX presented in March 2020 with the festival ‘Come together’ at
- XXXI theater Frascati, Amsterdam. Reinout Bos took the photos
- XXXII numbered from 29 to 41 Eti Steinberg took photos 42 and 43.
- XXXIII Here is a list of titles for these images: the magician invites
- XXXIV six guests to join her at her table, three two one gone, the
- XXXV vanishing glass, appearing inside the magician’s mouth, the
- XXXVI bathtub, paper instrument and half smiles, warming up the
- XXXVII hands, levitation, at the table, exhibition, folding, hand dance,
- XXXVIII Camille Gerbeau and Nina Boas, readers, séance.
- XXXIX
- XL
- XLI
- XLII
- XLIII
- XLIV Book cover of *Papier incomestible* (Gallier 2020), layout by Connie Nijman.
- XLV Magician Vincent Gambini (also known as Augusto Correiri)
- XLVI performed *The sky from this window* (phone-based performance), as part of ‘Dial-a-spectacle’ in October 2020 and as part of MagicFest in December 2020. There is a photo of the sky from my mum’s window during his December performance – a little light, a house, darkness - and a screenshot of my phone.
- XLVII Choreographer Jennifer Lacey works on *Extended Hermeneutics* since 2010, using collections of artworks as a divining system to address problems and at the same time offering a sort of repoeisis of the work in question. Lacey designs cards to activate these works and refer to them. In the context of the book *Fieldings* (Doruff et. al 2021) Lacey made cards to ‘hold the place’ of each of the fellows of THIRD cohort one, which I am part of. She made the card ‘TOILE’ holding the place for my research.
- XLVIII In November 2020, I received a letter handwritten by the living book *Confessions d’un mangeur d’opium anglais* by Thomas De Quincey by post, as a performance of *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* (Edvardsen 2010).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This practice-as-research is the culmination of performance practices and of ideas that are entangled with the works of choreographers, artists, and thinkers; it would be against the discourse I present in this thesis to claim these ideas and practices as entirely my own. *Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle* has been dependant on discussions with friends and peers, on artistic collaborations, and on support of institutions.

My practice-as-research developed with the support of the Centre for Dance Research (C-DaRE) at Coventry University coupled with the support of the THIRD research group at Amsterdam University of Arts. I am grateful to everyone at C-DaRE who makes of this research centre a stimulating environment. The symposia 'Digital Echoes', and the 'Dance and Somatic Practice Conference,' organized by C-DaRE, have been occasions to think dance and performance documentation with others, to debate, to present, and to experiment. My fellow PhD Candidate Teoma Jackson Naccarato has been the best ally: thanks for exploring the confluence of our practices and for being the sharp and generous reader I needed in the last months of writing this thesis. I want to express my gratitude to my director of studies and my supervisors: Simon Ellis, Hetty Blades, and Sarah Whatley. My practice-as-research would not have been possible without their continuous support, immanent attention, and critical voices, rigorous feedback, patience and sense of humour. In Amsterdam, my artistic practice found a safe space with the group of peers THIRD: Alice Chauchat, Julien Bruneau, Suzan Tunca, Agnese Cornelio, David Weber-Krebs, and Edit Kaldor. I could not ask for a better place and a better 'cohort' to experiment and develop my art. I thank these peers who critically engaged with my work, helped me with comments, literature and suggestions. I am grateful to Sanne Kersten, Sher Doruff and Marijke Hoogenboom, at DAS Research, for their continuous trust that enables dares. I thank my two examiners Dr. Efrosini Protopapa and Dame Siobhan Davies for their involvement with this thesis and the last push they supported. I acknowledge Coventry University Research Studentship that financed my full involvement with this practice-as-research from 2016 to 2019; and the Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds, which financed an additional year.

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ABSTRACT

Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle offers to sit with readers in performance and to examine the documents they hold in their hands. What happens in performances when the audience is reading? *Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle* demonstrates an example of research where practice supports the characterization of discourse. Practice, for this research, consists of attending performances (by Mette Edvardsen, Anouk Llaurens, Alice Pons, and Olivia Reschovsky), making performances as a choreographer (for the stage and for the page), and speculating. This practice-as-research characterizes the immanent attention resulting from the solitude of reading merged with the collective nature of an audience.

Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle draws on artistic research, performance studies, philosophy, and anthropology. Reading is a hyphen between the intensely discussed concepts of performance documentation and audience participation. In performances where the audience reads, documentation made for this audience is taken beyond questions of conservation, robustness, permanence and availability. Documentation is examined for the attention it generates in the real time of performance. Reading is proposed as an implicated gesture of participation; a kind of participation that composes with withdrawal. *Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle* focuses on the solitude of reading merged with the collective nature of an audience in order to observe our implication in the imaginations of others. Performances where the audience reads are proposed as dramaturgical tools to experience and rehearse the impersonal.

Reading in performance, Lire en spectacle articulates entanglement. This thesis works with the intricacy of form and content. It hosts discourse about documentation and participation while enacting examples of performative documentation and implicating readers through the use of different writing modalities, words, layout, design, edible and non-edible papers, and performances.

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